Title: Death is My Human Right (Abjekt Honesty)

Genre: Moriographie

By a Batchelor of Arts and Master of Letters

Moriword

February 2024—I had what I kall *pikture memories.*

Pikture memory one:

A bus driver standing above me like he was a God, telling me I was going to be okay.

|||Void|||

Pikture memory two:

A nurse giving me a morphine shot. She said my heart stopped six times.

|||Void|||

Pikture memory three:

I was walking over an old bridge with pyjama trousers and bare feet.

|||Void|||

I slowly bekame konsciously aware again inside a Mental Health ward and began to remember a life that I struggle to kall a life. Normal people write a story about their life and kall it a memoir. I kould do that if I wanted—I don't want—this is not about mere want. This is a need to tell you about my Death[s]. Why? The kountry I live in has over ten times more drug deaths than the European average. It's all I kan do to help stop it. If I do that, I might be able to live with myself.

There is no proof of any of this bekause I never gave my name to anyone but police. Even then, it was only bekause they would lock me up if I didn't. This may be real. Then again, I repeatedly state my memory is a lying bastard. Maybe none of this happened and I am so used to lying that I believe my own bullshit.

I was the epitome of bad before I was old enough to know what it meant. The word was stuck on my forehead. Sent into the world, I played the role I was given to oskar winning perfektion. When a society sticks a label on a child's head, the child will embrace it, nurture it, and embellish it. If that child is as extreme as myself—society has a problem. What society seems to forget is that it kreated the fucking problem in the first place.

I am the nightmare you are stuck inside. The horrifying Abjekt Reality. A living insomnia. Kreated by you. Konditioned by krime[s]. Kapable of katastrophik khaos.

I broke every rule in life. Why would I stop when it komes to writing about it? This is my Moriographie. Death okkured so often that it bekame a boring bureaukratik hindrance and is respekted as such. Getting up and living again was treated like a minor redraft; a tut of the mouth and roll of my eyes. If you are looking for tenderness, fuck-off and read a fairytale.

If you want to know what really happens, how far an individual will descend to ensure they get what they believe they need, then follow me through my 24 year—self-imposed—Death sentence.

Death One

Abjekt Honesty 1.1-1
In the beginning, Death kreated heaven, hell and the earth.
Life was without form and a void.
Darkness krept from the depths.
Inside that darkness,
I was given a kompulsion: *Tell the truth, no matter how kruel on myself.*
Interrogate my soul.
For that shall make me whole.

Soundtrack: Coil – *A Cold Cell (Bologna, Italy)*
"This is dedicated to all the people who are in prisons;
physical prisons and prisons of their own making."

Once upon a time I was dead.

I will begin again…

Once upon kountless times I was dead. Not once. Not twice—umpteen fucking times. I've been dead more times than a kute-old-grandpa-vampire kharakter kalled Pops. Due to a fatal addiktion to sunlight he dies on a daily basis. He sits all night long watching black-and-white vampire movies. When the mo[u]rning arrives, the mad old bastard kan't help himself. He races down the koffin hall, straight through the door—and explodes like a dragon drone. A katastrophik means of eskape. His reality impaled by that mo[u]rning ritual and once human need for the sun. He's a very distant kreature whose manner diktates that he smiles and seems approachable. The vampire kommunity love him and kan't help but ressurekt him.

They say: "He's harmless. Good old Pops. What a kharakter. Let's save him one more time." That *one more time* never ends. Love bekomes entangled in enablement, but it still shines like the sun Pops chases. Any person, or vampire, who loves too much will soon run dry of it. Kan you imagine a world without love?

I know a world without love bekause I numbed it out myself with drugs. Love is the essence of humanity. But we are losing the biggest fight of all. We allow this to okkur. We are all komplicit on that one—not just me. Humanity inhales sheer beauty and then exhales the very substance that makes us what we kan be. Somewhere, we all kare, even me.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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Deep down here, in the pit of my gut, I kare.

You probably won't understand me right now, so I'll paint you a pikture with one word—insanity.

The vampire is me and I am he.

We're both justified. We both love. We both find it is never enough.

People love me and I love them too.

Just like Pops, I kept destroying myself—over and over. I don't do a lot of explaining, so this is a one-off. If you were a vampire, would you run into the sun every day knowing it would kill you? That is the difference between normal human beings and drug addikted human beings. We kannot help but do what we know will kill us, every day of our pain-ridden existence.

I didn't just run into the sun. I katapulted myself into the thing.

The very next day, I did it all over again—Abjekt Honesty.

Love—just love—saved me.

☆☆☆

AnnoDomini[atrix]2000–2002

My Moriographie begins in the oppressive world of slamming doors, bars on windows, men with keys and kriminals. A routine drenched, anti-existence that I found paradoxikal. In jail, I found freedom from restraint, from being good and from paying fucking bills.

Inside the big walls and barbed-wire fences, lurked a big boy's naughty world on magik mushrooms. It served a side helping of ultra-disturbing violence on a daily basis.

Sterile. Endless. Unsafe.

In that hellhole, situations and their konsequences lived as vividly as any human being. Anything kould happen at any time. Anyone kould explode at any sekond. Inside the steel and reinforced konkrete walls, the only time that was relevant to prisoners was medikation time, visiting time, dinner time and far off liberation dates.

The walls klosed in tighter every morning—it wasn't the walls, or even the savage methods of inflikting pain on each other that terrified me—it was those neutral institutional kolours. Ghastly hues that drained the life from everything—as if someone had painted the world in lamentation.

I snuck and krept along dates like they were etched on gravestones. Grinding and dragging my way to the end of a sentence for house-breaking and possession of a shotgun. It was abhorrently diffikult bekause the full sentence was just under 4-years, and I was hemmed into a krackpot-central, short-term wing—affektionately known as "Viet-fucking-nam." Every single day of my life, people would either be released, after serving very short sentences, or were preparing for their release the following day—both friends and enemies alike.

There were times when my liberation felt so far off, I kouldn't imagine not being locked up. I was a kouple of months short of being klassed a long-term prisoner—that tekhnikality broke my back. If I'd been given a 4-year sentence, I would have been doing the shortest sentence in a long-term wing. Instead, I was doing the longest sentence in a short-term wing.

Short-term wings are disruptive and never settled. Psykhotik cirkuses.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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I was alone.

I had always been alone, just not in the konventional sense.

Family, lovers, friends, enemies—they existed. But my self-induced wreckage severed any understanding of how relationships should work. Isolation wasn't new. It had bled through my being, stitched beneath my skin by oddness and extremes.

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👁 Eyes👁

👁👁 Eyes were everywhere I looked👁👁

👁👁👁 I kame to know eyes very quickly👁👁👁

👁👁👁👁 In jail, eyes said more than words ever kould👁👁👁👁

I was just [k]old enough to experience konvikt life with books, and then further down your society's piss-fall of malfunktioning justice, with TVs humming like kattle waiting to be shot. What I mean is—I remember the place with books only. When jail meant either reading or sitting in the overkooked mayhem of my own head. The book era I preferred. My hatred bekame infamous the day I threw my TV over the first-floor barrier, smashing it onto the dinner tables below. It shattered akross the wing. They took me away in arm-locks and threw me in solitary konfinement.

The first of many trips to the dreadful, yet spotlessly klean, segregation block. It bekame my sekond home in every way but love for it. There were certainly no TVs in segregation. I was very pleased to find a bible that hadn't been smoked—yes, it happens—or ripped to pieces. It had an intakt last book within it. That trippy, religion-themed apokalypse bekame my soul entertainment.

My obsession with the end of everything was rooted in childhood. I had a father who was a fireman and he had shown me around the fire station one day, told me about the nuklear attack early warning system, showed me Geiger kounters, NBC suits, and underground tunnel skhematiks. Then, as a treat, he showed me the horrifik BBC dokumentary: *The War Game*. I was never the same again. Not long after, a koncerned library worker phoned the skhool and told them they had a nine-year-old child konstantly asking for books related to nuklear war.

The ever-present eyes weren't ever-present in segregation. The only ones I saw belonged to the block supervisor. When it was quiet, he'd slip me some meals his wife kooked. He was the only person I saw for weeks, probably the only skrew I liked. A reasonable man. Before running the korridor of lonely souls, he'd been a skrew in my wing. One day after work-party, he let me back into my cell. My jail-made brewery of apples, oranges, sugar and Marmite had exploded all over the Peter. That's what a cell is kalled in jail, look it up yourself—I'm trying to tell you a story.

He chuckled and said: "You fucking nutkase! Get it kleaned up before some kunt sees us!"

When I was in solitary, he would walk along the korridor once a day and take me out to the segregation exercise area. It was basikally a kage. I would sit in the late afternoon sun for my hour, and the sun would tan me into something like a dead zebra whose kurving stripes had been ironed unnaturally straight. I thought it was kool to have *a jail suntan* and wore my stripey skin like a badge of honour.

Six months after being released from segregation, they gave me another TV. It met the same fate as the last one—bounced off the tables below. Afterwards, in their dingy little office, next to my name, the dreaded words were skrawled: "NEVER GIVE HIM A TELLY!"

Even in jail, I was all twisted and mangled. Skrewed deep in defiance with no limits. I radiated a subversiveness the staff were supposed to kontrol—but how do you kontrol what kan't be

kontrolled? Their solution was obscene amounts of anti-psykhotik meds. For a moment, they thought they'd made me behave. Yes—just drown the drug addikt in cheap downers. Great idea.

One morning, my work party was kleaning the main route through the jail. I was pulled by the governor. He said: "Are you on drugs? You kan't be in this state on the main walkway!"

Stood before him—eyes firmly klosed—I said: "Yes, I'm on lots of drugs. 500mgs of quetiapine every morning. Your shitty staff give me this and I kan't *NOT* sleep! I sleep 24/7 thanks to their fucking genius method of quietening me down!"

He spat back: "You're on report for raising your voice and swearing at me!"

Typikal. Back to segregation. Back to the bible—that beautiful and brutal last book. My only kompany. My damned gospel of inevitability. Whether my days were spent with prisoners, edukation staff, skrews, governors, or nurses. A slight detachment hung over me—normal people might have rekognised it and done something about it.

I was not normal. I kould not. There was something very wrong with me back then—something koiled so deep, so inherent, I kouldn't unravel what I was.

But in jail my wrongs felt like a kushioned, purple velvet koffin. The half-witted chaplain had a soft spot for me. He kept koming to my door—the bastard was trying to turn me into a khristian. I didn't want to be a khristian. I hate religion. I got sick fed-up of his persistence, took the genesis pages from his daft bible, and made a Pentagram on the floor. When he kame back, I set it on fire and danced in the flames. He never kame back again.

My aktions, along with my black klothes, earned me the jail name—Satan. I have never been fond of nicknames, but being kalled the devil in hell seemed a nice fit.

"Satan! You want a game of pool?"

"Where's Satan?"

"Satan is seeing his lawyer!"

Anno Domini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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Even the devil has a heart. Satan gave as much as he took. Does being kalled the devil in hell make me a bad person? An abomination, yes. A bad person, no.

Forget the hell you're reading and take in the variables.

Addiktion doesn't appear from nowhere. Violence doesn't just erupt one day. Kruelty isn't a birth right. You probably won't like me, but you must understand me. I don't make exkuses—I never have. I want you to get it, for your sake and not mine.

There will be no apologies. Just kold fakts. I will tell you my truths—my Abjekt Honesty.

Today's version of honesty is aligned with society's rules. It's like a dam built by drunk beavers on downers—leaking streams of filth into a shimmering lagoon of purity.

Apparently, it's wrong to be this honest. That shit makes me laugh, if it's not honesty—it's lies.

To be (honest) or not to be (bullshit).

Think...

If that's my truth about the truth—what about yours?

Are you as honest as you say?

Are you a bad person?

Only *you* know.

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A tall, weary shoplifter with short brown, badly kut hair, dodgy trainers and breath that smelled like it was from Chernobyl, was often my next-door neighbour, whether I liked it or not. He krammed around ten sentences into my one. He was nothing if not [in]konsistent—in/out/in/out—like a mourner's breath between sobs. Reluktant to leave and unable to stay. I was sick of raising my eyebrows in shock. They just stayed raised, which was fitting, I suppose, with my *Satan* identity. His life was prediktability inkarnate—not even the weather kould be arsed changing for him. Maybe it rubbed off—I eventually got bored of the locked-in-cell nonsense and decided to have more fun.

Anyone who has been to jail will tell you, drugs make the days go faster. So, I had my girlfriend deliver a parcel of heroin—every weekend, smuggled deep inside the one place skrews kouldn't search. Initially, the package kaused khaos during our visiting time. Eventually, it went up my arse, and we got on with being a kouple. The heroin was housed in a blue water balloon, so I kould easily distinguish it from the shit it was embedded in when I got back to the wing and squatted over a newspaper.

What I loved most was the ceremony—tempting, swerving, dodging skrews who watched me like rabid, ravenous animals waiting for blood. I loved that I kould put something up my arse without them witnessing it.

I loved akting like a fucking magician.

I loved being bad in the baddest place of all.

I loved no one—just heroin and its fallout.

The shoplifter paraded his misery on TV for a short while, bekame a star of Scotland's trashy, exploitative media. Cheap programming follows someone like that relentlessly, exploits the shit out of him, then moves on—untouched by his unbearable, obvious pain.

Talk about a bad taste in my mouth—it was like chewing the rotted feet of Paul and Barnabas, those nomadik saints of endurance. I knew survival. I knew pain. The vile taste left by people exploiting the weak? That was beyond reason. Beyond every reason.

Where does reason even live in jail?

Gossip: "Satan's been shagging the art tutor!"

Who's got new trainers: "Satan's got them new New Balances."

Who's holding drugs: "Satan skores tonight."

Who's got phone kredit: "Satan swaps drugs for phone kards. He'll have a spare."

Kharakter assessments, hourly.

1600: "Satan thinks he's better than us."

1700: "Satan is gonna end up getting slashed! Don't like him bekause..."

1800: "Satan is meant to be the devil, but he's not even a baby demon, *fuck's sake*."

Jail was darkly alluring. It was the people—human beings—who made it unbearable. Not in the way you think. Not even in the way they shout, skheme, and torture each other until there is nothing but skreams. I just kouldn't handle human beings—never kould. Well, I kould handle my girlfriend when she was delivering a load of heroin that would keep me going for days. What I mean is—human beings who were being normal human beings were a pain in the arse to me. If they did not serve a purpose, I kouldn't be bothered entertaining their wants or their needs.

I was only koncerned with my own wants and needs—heroin.

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My girlfriend from back then is dead. She is full-time dead. Not like me—I'm only a part-timer. She's hard at it 24/7. No holidays. No tea breaks. No reprieve. Full-time.

Keep this between us please.

She had a huge influence on me and everything that followed during those dekades of khemikal induced koma living. She was older, much older—like a fairy godmother I kould get high with and fuck. We were a dubious kouple who shoved so many drugs in each other, we lived inside a sordid bedtime story—written in smack and sweat with syringe pens.

I blackmailed her father while she was still alive bekause I had the power to do so. Power asks no questions. If someone allowed me to get away with any krime, they soon learned monotony. Routine korruption was just another scene in my play. I squeezed every angle till it bruised. He despised me from day one. His hatred was so konstant that I learned it, then used it against him. Did I fear the law? No. I just akcepted it and worked around it.

The thing is, I don't want to admit being a blackmailer to you—a stranger.

Kome kloser. I won't bite. Aktually, I might. Stand back. And brush your teeth.

My manipulation of the laws we live under karried on for so long, I kan now manipulate myself without knowing. Entanglement. The mess I make kreates knots I kan't untie.

Okay, I kan smell your breath.

Seriously—stand back.

Get too klose—voila! Up in smoke. Like every[thing]one else.

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Once I picked the blue water balloon out of my own shit, jail bekame a rewarding joint with lots of heroin. I dealt. I fought. I kaused kreative karnage everywhere I was allowed to be. I loved jail. Everything about it. I knew I would never go back so just made the most of what was on offer.

When 9/11 was unfolding, I remember being taken to the library bekause I'd ordered Mogwai – *Rock Action*. I was minding my own business—only wanted the album. The librarian pointed to the TV skreen—airplanes krashing, buildings burning, bodies flying. I rolled my eyes and went back to my cell with *Rock Action*. People were dying live on TV, but I had a new Mogwai and lots of heroin. We all have priorities. The world was burning—I was trying to stop living.

One morning, the skrews were doing their number checks around 0623. I was bent over on the floor like I was praying to God, kould hear the ekhoes of doors opening and slamming shut somewhere in the distance. Far off but getting kloser. I'd been smoking Klass A preemo-dope all night long and was so wasted I kouldn't move. Suddenly a skrew opened up and stepped in. I met his gaze. It kould only have been sekonds but it seeemed like an eternity. He just tutted and shook his head, staring me deep in the eyes with such bright blue pools of sympathetik sorrow.

Absolutely fucking touching.

I bekame aware of the big hook to the story as it bekame visible to him. The tin foil—used to smoke the shit, was stuck to my face by the sticky residue from a *beetle* of heroin. He wouldn't dare peel it off my face. He was very aware he had a very disturbed young man on his wing. The door slammed shut and he vanished—like a fairy godfather—one I kould neither take drugs with or fuck (not that I wanted to). I shook my head and smoked my shit. It wasn't important. Nothing was more important than getting destroyed on narkotiks.

Not 9/11.

Not being blatantly kaught with heroin.

Not me.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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Every time I smoked, injekted, or snorted that poison, it took me far away from myself. Further from my family. Further still from healthy relationships with women.

In jail, none of that really mattered, but it was there that I detached more so than ever before.

Though I was no longer a child, heroin triggered a prolonged emotional void. I didn't feel alone bekause I was always fucked out my head.

Inside, I was a child—a pitiful little boy.

Outside, I was skary—serious, dismissive, kruel and rage-ridden.

Was I in love with jail? Yes, at the time.

But only now, with hindsight, kan I truly peer inside that prison and feel meagre empathy for the child I was.

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The sorest thing about being locked-up? Konnekting with people—then diskonnekting—bekause they were taken away. I've never found it easy to konnekt. Every now and then I made the effort. But like odds on rain at a Scottish funeral—everyone died once I did.

Guaranteed.

My memory is a lying bastard. Still—the evidence says it's true—I do not konnekt: I diskonnekt. Anything good in my life disappeared, no matter where I was. No matter what I was. No matter who I tried to be. I am a malediktion on any friend. Any lover. Any family.

I am a hex.

I made a friend in jail. A tall, kind dude with short, kurly, dirty-blonde hair, big beaming brown eyes and a warm manner. We klicked almost immediately. He disliked the enormity of being locked up. I did what I kould for him each day. He gave me a short-lived sense of purpose. I wanted the best for him.

Remember though—I am a kurse.

There was a presence about him other prisoners didn't seem to have. Maybe it was his height, or the way he karried himself—kalm and beyond—like he didn't belong. He was so well dressed. Being in a private prison meant we got to wear our own klothes—small privileges for the punished. We didn't have to wear those daft red and white, vertikal striped shirts, looking like sticks of seaside British rock. He was above it all. Above them all. In every sense. Dressing well works wherever you are, even in jail. Especially in jail, where appearance matters. Respekt is respekt. Being a hard man is being a hard man. Psykhopaths were a great laugh. Bent skrews had their uses.

But style?

Style rewrites the terms. It elevates you—above judgment, beyond feeling, and above the reek of opinion. Someone like me will appear if you have style, like a ghost at a séance, and help. Akin to that ghost, I'll disappear too. But I'm not the type of ghost to leave a house half-haunted. I don't only rattle chains—I redekorate first.

I tried my hardest with him. It wasn't aktually all that diffikult I suppose—I had time to kill. Quite literally. Every morning, we would have a kup of tea and breakfast together. He would kome to edukation with me and I enkouraged him to paint, write and talk.

I knew he was on the verge of suicide territory, but I didn't have a klue what to do. He said: "I kan't do much more of this shithole. It's killing me. I hope my lawyer phones me today with good news about my appeal."

I told the truth: "Look mate, you're doing an eight-month sentence. With good behaviour you'll be out in half that. Fuck the appeal. Get your head down. Keep being you. Stop worrying so much. I know I'm not the best person to kome to, but I'm here if you need me. Don't worry if it's late at night and we're locked up—shout through your door and I'll shout back."

I was in jail for a reason, was not a social worker.

He said: "What? That'd wake the whole wing!"

I told him what needed saying: "Fuck them! They don't kare about you. At night they all shout and karry on like skhool kids on intravenous ritalin. Surely you've heard them shouting me in the wing at nights? They shout: *'Satan! Satan! I need some teabags—kan you give them to the skrew when I send him to your door, please mate?'* Shout me. Please!"

I wish he had.

I'll never forget how my heart dropped, like an overweight body falling from a skyskraper, when I heard the news I didn't want to hear. I knew he was troubled, and I'd done what I kould, but it was never enough. A friend, the prison art tutor, told me the truth: "He pressed his buzzer around one in the morning for help, but the officers ignored it. By six, he'd hung himself. The staff are under investigation for not answering the buzzer for five hours. They're in trouble."

The Poor bastard kouldn't give himself the time he devoted to hope.

It was such a sad okkasion. Exkruciating ekhoes—eternal, reaching from my past, disturbing my present, infiltrating my future. I wish I kould say someone was there when he kried out to no-one. They weren't. The silence wasn't just absence—it was wilful neglekt. They were probably watching an EastEnders omnibus instead of doing their jobs.

Ignorant kunts.

And yes—they fucking were in trouble. My heart hit the floor and exploded. I was outraged. Those bastards reflekted how the entire prison system didn't kare. I looked up and down the wing from the first-floor landing.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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This is a horrible truth, but it is the truth all the same—per head of population, there's a higher percentage of decency and talent in jail than anywhere else I've known. And I've known life from every possible angle. I've written your shitty newspaper. I've read poetry on your national radio. I've taken you in RIBS to dive sites, then waited in the sun as you pilfered a shipwreck. I've given money and food to the homeless person you walked by. I've stood next to you at gigs, from The Fall to Primal Scream to Faust, and then I've walked your daughter home afterwards—didn't even try to kiss her. That's who I am. I know what it means to be human.

I know real human beings with real talent when I live metres away from over sixty of them every night. I must take it all back to myself. I didn't know what I was back then. Neither did they. And still—to this very day—jail is jam-packed with misguided, silenced, intelligence—kapable of so much more. Society is as guilty of wilful neglekt as those bastards who ignored the buzzer.

Imagine such talent. Hidden, thrown like dead meat into jail. A travesty of the modern day.

History tells us that if you push people under—everything komes out wrong.

Yet we are repeating the exakt same mistakes.

Read the books. Don't expekt me to teach you—I am not your fucking teacher.

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I went straight back to the wing and started a riot. I knew how to hand out what they perceived as dangerous information and did so to my heart's kontent. I felt 100% justified.

I lie to myself, so thoroughly—*the world* is obliterated and bekomes *my world.*

I enjoyed a little riot every now and then, especially when I was outraged for good reason. The wing exploded from within. Televisions and kameras smashed. Phones were yanked off the walls. Pool tables broken in two—the balls used as mikrokannonballs. Old skores were settled—men running about with half their face hanging off. Blood up the walls and over the floors.

Another prisoner and I ran the length of the wing with a half-ton food trolley. We raced fifty meters and slammed the trolley through six-inch-thick glass sliding doors. It smashed through the bars, shattered the glass, and pinned a fat skrew to the kontrol room wall behind it.

Then sirens.

Men in armour with batons.

Beaten prisoners everywhere.

Authoritarian rage—inkapable of akting its age.

Defiance.

Blood. Noise. Khaotik scenes.

More sirens.

Silence.

Sil*ence*.

Silence.

After the riot, the skrews kame into my cell, beat me with their batons, and dragged me akross broken glass. I was eventually taken in arm locks—certainly not eskorted—back to that damned segregation wing. More Revelation. I spent over four months in solitary altogether, interspersed with brief flashes of being thrown back into a general population I was already fed up with.

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Very fed up.

Revelation on repeat. Destruktion without teeth. Death—the only reality left. My next-door-neighbour died peacefully on xmas day. I thank whatever force guides me through the murk, I wasn't locked up forever and didn't die in there too. I know that I should have been. I should have been stretched alive until I was thirty feet in length, bones pulled from their sockets, thrown in a mincer, and skattered akross the British Isles.

All *you* need to know is what the street and jail know: I have never kommited murder. I have never kommited sex-krimes. I have never kommited krimes against children. I have never kommited krimes against old folk.

Everything else. I mean everything else—Abjekt Honesty.

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A few weeks after the lovely little riot, I was still in segregation, and back in trouble.

The setting for this konversation was the prison governor's office—all light brown tacky furniture, plastik green seats, walls krowded with kids' piktures, fake flowers; and a wall board with prisoner's names and numbers skrawled in red. I was staring at mine when he rudely interrupted: "We have information that yourself and another prisoner in segregation engaged in subversive koercion. We have decided to talk to you instead of putting you on report."

Eyeballing me while playing with the end of his awful grey moustache.

I wondered if this was how he spoke to his children bekause he made me feel like an unruly minor. I opened the hole in my face in protest: "Are you mental? How kan you subvert other prisoners when you kan't even look them in the eye?"

I was offended. How dare he talk to me like that, especially in front of those terrible images of his children. They didn't seem to mind, right enough. He believed myself and another prisoner were kommunikating through our doors at night in attempts to avoid being moved to another prison.

Told him: "I've no problems going on my jail holidays to Barlinnie. The guy involved in the food-trolley palaver wanted to do a shit protest (shit in a bowl, add water, make paste, kover yourself in it—put it up the walls), bekause he was skared of Barlinne. I said: *'I'm still in jail. Jail is jail, for fuck's sake!'*"

"We have you both rekorded," said the diktator of alienation avenue. Sitting at his little desk, with his cheap jail suit on. That gruesome looking facial hair seemed to reflekt how I felt. He was in kontrol, and projekted suppression into my despikable soul. An objekt for me to hate, like I hated life.

I skreamed in protest: "I'm innocent! If you have it rekorded, you know! For once, I am—very much—not-guilty! I was aktually the mediator you arseholes would pay thousands for half-an-hour's work! I talked him out of it!"

The fat kontroller said: "Stop being melodramatik! What should I do with you? You kan't even be kept in segregation without kausing trouble." It was as if his job was at risk. Maybe he was petrified for his children's futures bekause he kouldn't handle what I was doing.

I made one of the pissy mattress faces I excel at in reply.

He said: "Since you have been here, lemme see... August 2000"—flicked through a red folder—"you have been civilian charged by the police for wilful destruktion, assault, and inciting a fucking riot! What would you do with you?"

"I would kill me. But I'm just an idiotik prisoner. Haven't done fuck all since the food trolley!"

Perplexed governor: "*Hah. Hah. Hah.* Get the fuck out of my office! And remember this: if you get into any more trouble—the only choice left is a ghost train adventure to a different segregation block, in a different prison, whenever we feel like it!"

It hit me hard—like a karate chop to the throat. The ghost train was what prisoners feared. Spending a life in solitary konfinement, punktuated by a sudden change of venue. Handkuffed to

the max, off to another dungeon.

I was skared, but I kouldn't allow him to feel like he had skared me.

Then I said what I now respeckt: "I am a ghost. Even ghosts need to travel. Inkarcerated ghosts? We don't know where to go. We don't know how to move. We don't know what to feel. All we know is we disappear one day at a time. Until there is nothing but rotten flesh in a cell." I kould feel the unbearable pressure of emotion deep down inside, slithering through every inch of my gut. It wanted to be liberated. Like me by that point of my jail journey.

He yelped: "Go! Get the fuck out of my office! Or I will put you on report again!"

Anger I kan deal with. I am angry by default—my natural setting. It is never aimed at an individual, but systems of kontrol, bigger piktures. There was no anger towards this despot, whose baby despot's smiles lit up the walls behind.

Twenty years later and I'd have been sat in front of those little shits.

No rage. Just lack of respekt.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

☆☆☆

Yes, I was skared—indeed—I wonder if he knew.

Maybe we're all just ghosts. Already dead. Drifting through a world that doesn't kare, falling over the edge into oblivion. Gone.

Or maybe we are those happy, pride-filled souls that TV advertisements and wall piktures portray. I doubt it. I may—of kourse—be wrong, but I know enough to understand the people on the opposite end of the kamera lens are told or paid to look happy.

As for subversive koercion, did I know what it even meant back then? No. I do now—20 years later. Thanks to the internet. Those bastards were inkapable of artikulating their shitty terms.

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March 6th 2002 arrived and I was liberated. My girlfriend met me at the gates to the jail at 0800 in our old but very fast kar. She had her dog with her, some new designer klothes and sunglasses. I said thanks very much for all the thinking she had been doing about me: "But where's the drugs?"

She emptied her handbag. Klean needles, water, spoons, a lighter and a big bag of brown powder.

Now I kould get some peace from arsehole governors and get high. My kute-old-grandpa-vampire alter ego—Pops—was dying like a planet that had vomited its kore and wasn't wearing a bib. Flames licked him like kurious fingers, peeling back dekades of stubborn flesh. I was kareering like a snowball of shit *(shitball?)* toward my first Death.

My first few days of freedom were a blur. During that time, I applied to university and got in for September. Extreme to extreme is one of my specialities. I moved in with my girlfriend bekause I had nowhere else to go and shit turned sloppy fast. We'd been together for years and she served up a night of klimax and drowned linen—her and her friend—writhing like serpents on a burning bed. But they'd have been as well appearing as dead dragons. The apokalyptik sex I'd been looking forward to disintegrated. Opiates ruin lust. They starve it.

What should've been a ritual bekame dead theatre. If we hadn't been so wasted by Afghanistan's finest export, then embarrassment might've kicked in. No—we were all surfing the tidal grave of oblivion and happy enough. No sex was achieved, just naked, kommunal heroin [ab]use.

But I was freed with a jail habit, not a street habit, a measly teeny-weeny jail habit. There was a big heroin rock on the kitchen worktop. I kooked up a hit of street habit proportions bekause greed is also a default setting of mine.

Usually, the liquid turns amber.

This one was black—as black as my heart.

When it entered my blasphemous bloodstream, I didn't get high.

I just turned into shit.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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I didn't really turn into shit. I just died. My first Death at the age twenty-three.

Hellelujah... Hellelujah... Hellelujah...

Did I know? Not until my girlfriend told me. Of kourse I don't remember the Death itself.

My girlfriend brought me back with chest kompressions I'd taught her years earlier.

The gift of resuscitation passed down from my dad—the firefighter who saved many lives.

How many lives have I saved, besides my own?

A handful, at least. True story.

Think what you like of me but stay grounded in fakt.

I'm not after your judgment—either way—but balance is important.

In 2002, 382 souls died as a result of drugs—over three times the European average.

☆☆☆

Death Two

Abjekt Honesty 2.1-1
As I walk through the detritus of life, I bekome more detrimental to decency.
Sekurity men are with me, their ego supreme.
But I kare not—they save my arse and allow me to karry on regardless.
I will be whatever the fuck I want to be.
Then rip my soul apart with Abjekt Honesty.
The truth is all I have.

Soundtrack: ALL HANDS_MAKE LIGHT – *A Sparrow's Lift*
"When the birds don't sing,
the night says anything,
Why are you getting up again?
Are you seeing things in your sleep?
It's not a dream, it's real,
I don't have to know how I feel."

|||Thump—what the fuck was that?—Thump|||

AnnoDomini[atrix]2002

I kame to under a nurse with two pads on my upper chest inside a hospital ward. It was full of vampires, krazies, white bed-sheet ghosts, sinister man ghosts and little girl ghosts with inverted smiles. It was terrifying and alienating. I might have been a very konfused ghost. I didn't know shit to be honest. I grabbed my arm and nipped it. There was a slight registration of physikal pain. I must have been alive.

So many ghosts were in my immediate space. When they walked through me, I felt like I'd been sniffing poppers—a definite place not to be. My heart felt about to explode. Yellow trails were everywhere I looked. Huge diskomfort at being back to the fakt of the matter—me.

Me—up to me's arse in heroin withdrawals. Veins krying and begging for a break-in by a hypodermik needle. I needed some more heroin. It wasn't all that good to feel like a dude who needed something so badly—he would bite another man's throat and rip it out. Devouring all the untenable, red-charged birse attached to such desperation.

All to feel better from wanky withdrawals.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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Nah, wanky doesn't work. Wicked and agonising and sleep depriving fit so much better. Weeks and weeks of no sleep. Something that genuinely skared even me—still does. There is nothing in this world as painful as substance withdrawal.

How do I know?

I've been shot. I've been stabbed. I've been tortured. I've been kicked all over filthy streets. I've kaught killer diseases. I have been left all alone. I know pain very well, but it's lost its power—a dead depth charge ekhoing through my self-mutilated soul.

Defunkt.

"No pain, no gain," people say. I understand that now. With zero pain expelled, expekt zero sukcess. It's weird, the things that we bekome grateful for having again, when we go so long without them. Pain is beautiful. Seriously. What you have to keep in mind is why—I didn't feel any emotional or physikal pain for a diffikult year. I did a lot of damage to myself in that time.

One night, I was kooking steak and lifted it up and took a bite—burned my fingertips off and had a white tongue tip for three weeks. Pain is an ankhor to reality. I have it back, lovely pain.

Pain is beautiful. Pain is what we all experience. Pain *is* a human right.

What you do with your pain is important.

Abuse it. Defuse it. Use it.

Mould what is left into purpose.

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The NHS workers, who were probably too busy shagging in the storerooms, had not turned my pockets. I had lots of heroin in mine. Also, a spoon, water and glorious syringe.

The projekted target, with klearance to fire, was the mainline train to my heart and my brain.

I knew my girlfriend was around somewhere. But didn't want to share my hit with her. Wanted to be wasted all alone. Maybe meet her later, back home. If I was wasted, maybe I'd kook her dinner. Then I kould skrew her silly while listening to noise orkhestras. We kould go out to the cinema afterwards. Maybe. Something like that, as long as I wasn't in fucking withdrawals. I had to go somewhere to nourish my weary body. Publik toilets in a publik hospital. There's a certain grim komfort in knowing that any place kan be a final resting spot when life has bekome so unliveable. Only die-able.

Once again, I topped up a burned spoon with a small mountain of heroin. You'd think I had learned my lesson, having overdosed hours before. But no—I did it again.

Apparently, they had all been searching around the hospital for me. My girlfriend told me she was on the verge of giving up. She thought I had pissed off home. Then she met some staff who were trying to get into a locked toilet. The sekurity dude kicked the door in.

|||Thump—A reluktant drum machine remembered its rhythm—Thump|||

A doktor revived my heart. Ressurekted my bony arse. Kickstarted my journey back into the land of living people from the black void.

I never experienced white light, fluttering angels, komforting spirits, or heavenly peace.

There was nothing.

Nothing at all.

Every time—fuck all.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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Even black holes have light. I know. I have been far beyond black hole territory. Eventually, my soul bekame so black that I kouldn't see any light. Then it appeared—it always appears for me—light in the dark.

I sometimes find myself asking—why me? I suppose any sane person would ask themselves the same question. The truth, the Abjekt Honesty? I don't know why me, but I do know what I kan do with what I have left. I have dragged myself through many versions of hell get to where I am right now. My guilt tells me I am human.

Guilt is a human right.

✯✯✯

Two Deaths in quick sukcession.

My version of rehearsal without a kurtain fall. I was still way behind that kute-old-vampire kharakter. But I'd made my mark as a possible kontender.

They *stabilized* me with methadone. I had to go to a khemist every day of my life. If I didn't—I'd be punched in the throat by those wanky withdrawals. I used to say it was a human right to get high—it is klearly not.

I would imagine that it *is* a human right to have choice. I had none. Self-inflikted? Indeed.

I wouldn't have gotten through university without that stable period on methadone. Then I kouldn't get off the green slime served in a plastik kup by some lovely khemist ladies. Some real bastards as well. Twenty years was a long time to be khemikally altered *(Physikal Dependency)*. Did I feel like a junkie? No, not once—I was above that I believed. There was a part of me that suffered so very klinikally, but I just kept going *(Psykhologikal dependency)*.

Ethiks have a lot to answer for. Especially when ethiks—like mine—were forged inside torrents of nihilism and fuelled by drugs.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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Komplete diskonnektion. No sense of moral komprehension.

Nihilism, desperation, detachment and dekadence ensured that everything slowly burned away.

Everything that mattered fell through my grip like a dead friend's ashes.

Everything bekame Death.

That was my life.

And I want you to know this, as it is very fucking important—when I give you the drug Death numbers, those are the official numbers. You need to know they are representations of state klassifikation boundaries. They are not the full numbers.

If someone took drugs and krashed their kar, it would not be klassified as a drug Death. If someone kaught an infektion or disease and died—different klassifikation. If a person's heart, kidneys or liver were damaged over a period of time—they are not konsidered an official drug Death. If a person overdosed and hung on for a few weeks before dying of an infektion, their kause of Death would not be a drug Death. Suicide due to prolonged use? That is not konsidered an official drug Death unless the suicide was an overdose. They kall it suicide, I kall it bureaukratik sanitisation to preserve their jobs, their children's posh edukation, and to ensure the true skale of the monster is never shown. Now it is.

Abjekt Honesty works both ways. I am not sorry.

The number of 382 dead for 2002 is the state's official number.

There are so many more.

☆☆☆

Death Three

Abjekt Honesty 3.1-1
The thieves will embark on the Tour de Ecosse for Drug Money.
Dishonest work with filthy hands shall be done.
They will end up with much poison to share with each other.
Two will get high and one will die.
But Death will spit him back out.
Ensuring he will return one day—under a distant sun.
With the Book of Abjekt Honesty.

Soundtrack: Lankum – Go Dig My Grave
"And on my breast
A snow white dove
To tell this world
That I died for love"

AnnoDomini[atrix]2005

Two or three years of not dying brought me to my next Death. I was going to university, working in hotels, going on holidays, spending money I didn't have on klothes, and always up to no good in one way or other. I also bought my own dog in the times before dogs didn't kost as much as kars. A Border Collie from a farmer for £40.

My girlfriend and I would wake up with nothing on too many mo[u]rnings to mention. There were times when the only thing we had of any real value was our bodies. Times that, if it happened now—I'd imagine I would sell a kidney, a lung, or even my dick. To be an addikt who wakes up with no drugs, is one of the worst things I have ever experienced. I was never a good sleeper to begin with and ended up addikted to everything—uppers to keep me going, downers to slow me down—anything I kould use to abskond from the very essence of being. My sleep seemed to get worse on a nightly basis. Her and I were like two momma kows who had milked each other to Death every morning. No jobs. No life. No drugs. We would make huge amounts of money and go on even huger spending sprees. I would not be happy at night. Not unless I had fired everything we had from that turbo-charged syringe into my self-kontorted bed of sin. Our main method of surviving the torrential withdrawals? Theft, manipulation, and self-gratifikation. She was the best shoplifter I'd ever seen, had the demeanour of a skhoolteacher—very well-spoken, graceful, attentive, and utterly konvincing. She kould breeze into any store, appear to be an everyday lady, and walk out with a shitload of stolen treasures.

While she was doing that, I'd wait in the kar, bored and breaking into the many dimensions of withdrawal. Praying to a God I didn't believe in, she'd return soon with something. Anything. It was easy enough once she got back. I'd return the stolen shit—jackets, fire alarms, pots and pans etc (had several hundred unkles and aunts who didn't like what I had *bought* them). Then receive money or vouchers in return. She'd klear out other shops, while I was doing so.

Tour de Ecosse for Drug Money

Theft (Girlfriend empties the shelves of expensive shops)

+

Manipulation (Girlfriend's me returns what was never his, pretending he has lost his receipt)

=

Approximately £300 (per shop) in kash or vouchers

Repeat in Dundee. Repeat in Perth.

Repeat in Stirling. Repeat in Edinburgh.

Repeat in Glasgow.

The trajektory was then repeated in reverse on the way back to Aberdeen. Once we arrived, we would sell the vouchers to two rich old ladies. Their husbands had important jobs in Aberdeen's oil industry, meaning they had an everlasting supply of money.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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We made about £2000 every day. We had nothing but each other and drugs.

It wasn't sukcess—it was a konstant, life-defying loop. We'd make the money, then watch it vanish as quickly as it kame.

We got wasted, indeed. But the level at which we konsumed drugs swallowed everything that once had meaning. It's hard to explain—a need we kouldn't outrun. Not even when we'd taken so many drugs that we were shells, kurling into ourselves.

And then... The next morning—it started all over again.

Repetition kan be hypnotik. Tranced-up, rabid robots hunting what was killing us.

And just in kase you are thinking of trying it today, they will katch you. We did it so much, and so well, that the police and retail firms joined forces to make sure it was no longer possible. Just one of a 1GB database of krimes I didn't even have to walk free from—I never got kaught in the first place.

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The next high bekame my only fokus. The thought that I might die was just another konsequence of an endless sigh. I don't rekall karing at all. While I was busy not karing, life passed on by. When I began [ab]using drugs, it was like receiving every xmas all at once. Just a child. Over time, I wasn't doing it to feel good anymore—just to krawl by.

On very seldom okkasions, I hear the words: "Justifikation does not serve a person well." We justified our shoplifting and manipulation to each other by komparing ourselves to *granny bashers*. At least we weren't violent thieves. At least we weren't robbing old people. At least we were keeping the police in jobs. At least nothing—justifikation kreates more problems than almost anything else. Deep down, I knew. I am quite sure she knew too.

The truth was that we were stealing from a broken society. In doing so, we bekame the very essence of that frakture. We would wake up with zero, before long, we had too much—things we didn't need, things that kouldn't bring us happiness. I would wear a £1000 koat but still be battling withdrawals or ball-deep in krime.

We were pseudo-beings in a pseudo-world.

That's the truth.

As pseudo as it is or not. Just the truth.

It's klear we had gone beyond thanks to intelligence—a pair of high-funktioning addikts. We kould akcess anything—kars, klothes, gigs, hotels, art galleries, and holidays. We never enjoyed any of it except Klass A drugs.

I kan't remember half the stupid shit I did. Kan't remember a quarter of the places I went. Kan't remember most of the drugs I injekted. Looking back stings. But it's all too late to change anything. If we'd been kontent in addiktion, we might've been better off, although that's probably naive. Too much money, too many drugs—it always leads to disaster. I was never kontent. Addiktion turned me into something I didn't rekognize.

Was in my final year of university, doing a placement with the BBC. How I managed, I still have no idea. I interviewed people on everything from wildlife to folk musik. Didn't kare about the people I was meeting or the stories I was t[s]elling. All I kared about was my next hit.

One day, walking along the river with the dogs, I kame akross a group of refugees kooking swans. They had exekuted them out of necessity. I knew every swan in Britain was owned by the monarch and thought it would make a kool story. I didn't kare about who or why—only what, when and where. Didn't kare about their struggles, or anyone else's shit.

Everyone else was elaborate props—set dressing for the grand performance of me.

Back then, I'd have told you without hesitation: "Everything *is* about *me!*"

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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My disregard devolved into a void—just like Death. All I had left was an uber-ego and a firm belief that I deserved everything I wanted.

No one's feelings mattered. People were maggots to me. They either got out of my way, or they were squashed.

My arrogance still teeters on the edge of kruelty. I try to hold it down. I fail every day—Abjekt Honesty. Yes, I kan be an arrogant bastard. I left the BBC bekause they wouldn't publish a story I believed should be published. My reaktion? "Fuck the BBC!"

Back to a life of Death.

When our BMW broke down, my dad gave us a loan of an old Porsche, with the strikt rule: "Don't let HIM drive it!" I was behind the wheel twenty minutes later.

I'm speaking to you now—not bekause I kare if you fear Death—but somewhere beneath the rot, I think I still need to believe you do.

I understand that I am konstantly kontradikting myself, that I am the embodiment of what is wrong. I also understand that I kare, even though part of me doesn't give a fuck—I kare about the right things. Sometimes at the wrong times. But yes, I kare.

☆☆☆

We were walking down Union Street in Aberdeen. There was a homeless guy sitting on his arse, asking me for spare change. I was on the edge of saying something. She got in first. She looked down her ski-jump like nose at him and said: "Get off your arse and shoplift, you lazy bastard!" At the time, I found it hilarious. But it wasn't fair. In my warped mind it made a kind of sense. Make up your own mind what that says about me. Okay, I'll admit it—I still find it hilarious. Imagine her saying such a thing. I like absurd genius in the vein of Antonin Artaud. She had it and dealt it out on an hourly basis.

I kould never sit on the pavement and beg for koins. That level of vulnerability was too much. But I would kommit wicked krimes like manipulating the life out of a woman, old enough to be my gran, stuck at a till in Marks and Spencers. I wouldn't ask for help—I'd take it. Help myself to my perception of help. The logik of an illogikal mind is hard to grasp. I laughed then. I laugh now. I don't understand it, but I do. That was my reality. Indecipherable want kreated the need, and the need kreated us. We weren't living—we were reakting. With every injektion of drugs, we were reborn into a kind of half-reality. Obsessed with getting wasted. Vicious and konstant.

The beggar? I still remember his face when she said it. A quiet, pleading stare. A need for understanding that kouldn't reach me—not back then.

I didn't give a shit.

Not two shits.

Definitely no more shits.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

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If I'm honest, I'd be surprised if he's still alive.

These days, I give a lot of shits. Probably too many. I look around this kountry—one of the richest in the world—I kan't understand why it's so full of Death and people like him. He probably didn't need money, just someone to ask how he was. Maybe a konversation. Or just a kuddle. Any proof that he was still worth something.

I believe—now—everyone deserves to know their worth. Every person has worth. Even me.

I removed myself from any sliver of kompassion back then bekause I had such little value for myself—I had no gauge to work with. No understanding how to be human.

I was always privileged if I weigh myself up against other drug addikts. I didn't know any other way. They would be happy with £30 worth of heroin. I wouldn't be happy with £300 worth.

More, more, always more. So much more that open graves preyed on me.

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As *The Tour de Ecosse for Drug Money* kontinued along the mountains stage, some desperado, halfwit moved in downstairs from us. He liked prostitutes so much, he invited all of them back to be housemates. Seventeen prostitutes in a one-bedroom flat. The noise, the sounds—like some demonik khorus. A twisted kakophony of breathing, groans, kreaking, laughter, and God knows what else. At first, it was funny. Like watching a deranged reality show from the floor. Eventually, it started to rise and settle in. Like a shadow.

Kreeping.

Suffokating.

The walls went thin.

Not just from the banging, but from the weight of something darker. Every knock through the walls, kackling laugh, or beat of their shitty musik felt like an omen. I kouldn't breathe and kouldn't figure out why. I would wake up during the night and bang on the floor several times. Then I'd kollapse, konvinced I was going to die full-time. One night, I punched the wall and my fist went straight through it. The hole made the noise over two times louder.

I had one of my great ideas, phoned a newspaper and sold the story—*seventeen hookers, one bed, no shame.* No idea why they didn't print it—but they paid me. I only did it for drug money and bekause I wanted him to suffer like me. It didn't work. Back to the drawing board.

I still kouldn't breathe. That's when I worked out what was wrong—fucking panik attacks! If you've ever had one, you'll know what I mean when I say it was like drowning in my own vomit with my eyes open. I would wake up during the night and immediately go straight into one. Every single night. His next-door neighbour and I got talking on the stairs one day, he was sick fed up of it too. The police had been kalled several times and they—as per usual—had done nothing about it. Armed with a hammer each, we kicked his door in one day. There were no prostitutes and he was also gone. We put everything he owned in boxes, filled up the neighbour's estate kar, and took it outside town before burning the kar and everything inside it. He'd been having trouble selling it, so I thought we kould kill two birds with one stone. The guy received a £9000 pay out eventually, of which I received £1000 for my great idea, and the free-housing-for-whores klown downstairs got what we felt he deserved—nothing. I thought I was *The Emperor of Konsequence.* Had to resign from that lofty position bekause I needed more drugs though.

When my girlfriend and I had to take a break from self-obliteration, we'd piss off to Glasgow—sometimes Edinburgh or Manchester—to have a good night and let our hair down. She suggested we go to a klub with the fantastikal name of Espookio in Glasgow. We arrived in the Porsche (which I hammered to Death). It was Halloween. We got all spooked up, did as we pleased, and hit the klub dressed like witches. I had six ekstasy pills in my pocket. They weren't as good as they used to be. Ten long years had diluted the quality of the drug signifikantly. What used to give a perfekt buzz was now a dodgy, malfunktioning buzz. I believed I wouldn't get a good high from one. I remember fighting with my konscience. I wanted to swallow the lot, and somewhere inside, I didn't. I wasn't thinking anywhere klose to klearly and swallowed all six at once.

The next thing I remember was the massive rush of ekstasy kicking in. The flashing lights, kool shoes, happy faces, zombies, witches, vampires, ghosts, strobes, musik. There were too many evil spirits around me. I wasn't feeling well and interrupted my witch girlfriend's dance routine. Time to split the dancefloor like a peach, surf the juice out the door and go home.

I said: "I feel really tired and sick."

"Okay babe, let's get the fuck out of here."

We walked out of the klub and akross a bridge to the Gorbals area of the city where the kar was parked. I remember thinking that she didn't kare about much, but she did kare about me. I remember being in the kar home, listening to Throbbing Gristle – *20 Jazz Funk Greats*. I remember we run out of petrol and had to walk to a petrol station halfway between Glasgow and Stirling. We got back to the kar, followed by the usual wheelspin ritual and sped off. I remember puking out of the window at 120mph and skreaming at her: "Fucking slow down! My puke komes out, floats in the slipstream, then goes back into my mouth!"

Akkording to the now dead girlfriend, I passed into another dimension in Bannockburn, where Robert the Bruce had defeated an English army in 1314. A town steeped in history where thousands had died on a battlefield. I'd gone out a witch, came back a glitch—a twitching, wailing ghost with glitter in his mouth and fake kobwebs hanging from his ears, mumbling spells in the passenger seat of a Porsche. Too much ekstasy, not enough firewall. Should've paid for better protection. I passed out and died. No heart rate at all—I do not remember that bit. She thumped the restart button on my chest in St Ninians, then left me kooling like leftover takeaway while she summoned the spirit of opium in some goblin's flat. While she was shooting up with valkyries and monsters, a small mob saw me turning blue—again. They opened the door and dragged me back to the land of the living. I was revived on my personal battleground—my body. Just two miles down the road from the battle.

When I kame round after being saved, I felt betrayed. I was a ghost for ten minutes. How dare she summon heroin over my ghost! If she'd been unfaithful with another man, I might have lived with that. A great example of how addiktion works—I was dead but didn't want her getting wasted without me. Held a grudge for months.

|||Thump—A suspicious package detonation in my heart—Thump|||

And I woke up in some shithole hospital again. Pop's friends use the place like a supermarket. They aren't bad vampires. They have got to eat, like you do too. They kome into the emergency rooms at nights with their trollies and fill them up with food. Logikal vampires.

I got home and we split up after seven long years. There was absolutely no point in staying in a relationship with her. *I told you—I held a grudge, for fuck's sake.*

That meant our two Border Collies had to split up too. Poor little bastards. All dogs are bastards, or do they get married? I feel more remorseful about the dog divorce than I do for being dead

umpteen once upon a times, or for being in prison. My little dog kalled Frank wasn't ever the same dog without Harry. Frank is a diffikult memory. I wish I kould stop wishing—I'd done the wrong thing for Frank and kept him.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

☆☆☆

I understand this is really bleak but that is exaktly what I am—misery with legs.

I am also the person who'd pick up your mother, father, or grandmother if they fell. While others walked by, I'd stop and give them the attention they needed.

If, on the extremely rare okkasion, someone else stopped. Kool. Terrifik—I'd keep walking.

If there was no one else, there would be me. I'd sit with the human being until the emergency services arrived and took over. I would never leave them beforehand.

I am far from perfekt. I am the first to admit it though. In my experience, people who say they are perfekt are arseholes. Nobody is perfekt. We all make mistakes. Yes, my mistakes are above and beyond. But I own every single one without fail.

Yes— I'm bleak.

But every now and then—I bekome more human than I feel I am worth: Abjekt Honesty.

Scotland's drug Deaths for the year 2005 were 336.

☆☆☆

I will give you a little break from my bleakness for five minutes and tell you all about Frank. What komes after this will disturb you no doubt, so take a breath and pikture the dog I kalled:
"Wee Frank."

A brown and white Welsh Border Collie. Bright blue eyes and the pinkest little tongue. He adored me, and I adored him. When he was about one year old, I started walking him off the lead around Aberdeen. We'd go to the shop for the paper. He'd wait at the door. When people walked by, he'd dive at their feet and flop onto his back, tummy up, tongue out. Everyone loved him.

But Frank's owner had shared needles with any halfwit with an arm for over ten years. I had kaught a killer disease, but one with a kure. I had to go on Interferon treatment for Hepatitis C and kouldn't take Frank out every day anymore—just didn't have it. I wanted to give him the best home, and the best owner possible. The newspaper wouldn't let me place an ad giving him away for free due to legal restriktions. So, I worked something out that turned out better...

I manipulated the law and wrote a personal plea from Frank himself.

It started: "My daddy kan't look after me anymore. I'm so sad. He has asked me to move out, but I have nowhere to go..." Over 100 kalls that weekend. People were phoning just to say how beautiful the advert was. I made the right decision. Frank moved to the mountains in the North of Scotland and had a good life.

About a year later, his new owner was heading to hospital to visit her father, and she kalled me. We met up. Frank's koat had grown long and wild. I was so happy to see him and joked: "Frank! Wow! You've turned into a hippy, you little shit!"

I was better by then—just wanted to take him home—but didn't.
I did the right thing for Frank. Why I kould make such a klear and decent decision for a dog, but not for myself or anyone else, breaks me. Konfuses me. Still.

I still smell him. I still feel him next to my legs at night. All warm, soft and loving. I still kall his name by mistake. I survived Death, jail, her[s]—I never survived Wee Frank.

Okay. Back to bleak...

[[[The Death of Sexual Dignity: Abjekt Konsequence]]]

Abjekt Honesty 3.1-2
If a man fills my poor little self with drugs.
Then wank-rapes me while I sleep,
offers no money, no apology, no redemption.
He shall pay.
I will tell you what he done,
but not his name.
Why?
Follow me and see.

Soundtrack: Black Box Recorder – *Child Psychology*
"Life is unfair,
kill yourself or get over it.
Life is unfair,
kill yourself or get over it."

AnnoDomini[atrix]2005–2006

So, I left the girlfriend who is now dead bekause it had stopped working. The only time in my life I left a woman for the right reasons. Of kourse it wasn't bekause she had two-timed me with drugs. We had fallen out of love. I hadn't been single since I was seventeen and had a lot of fun—was moving into a new woman's house on a daily basis, as if they were an endangered species and I was their saviour (or so I thought).

Then I began seeing a semi-permanent girlfriend. Who, if I'm honest, must have been off her head to put up with me and my nonsense. She was my lekturer at university. Big puppy dog brown eyes, stunning in the looks department. Fantastik dress sense. More importantly to me—she kould help me with the shitty *Multimedia Publishing with Apple Software* module. I had no interest in that nonsense at all. While everyone else in my klass slogged hard at their workstations, I took it as my God-given right that she would do it for me. God must have agreed with me; she even had the cheek to award me—herself—an A. Obviously I agreed.

I finally settled in a city centre flat, shared with some students. It was on the way down to the train station. A train station I never used bekause I had kars to krash. I had a huge bedroom, kovered in deranged art, enhanced by equally demented audio terrorism. And a bed that moved around on wheels when I was fucking a woman.

It also had a fishing rod.

Your question would be: "Why do you mention a fishing rod?"

Let me tell you about Rat...

It wasn't aktually a rat as such, just a black sock filled with old koins. I chose to use the fishing rod to kast Rat out my bedroom window and down the busy street. Then I began reeling it in very slowly. There was a lap-dancing klub (never been) down the street from me. I would wait until a guy was walking past drunk. Then I'd reel Rat in.

They would shout: "Look at the size of that fat rat!"

I'd reel Rat in quicker as they began to chase it.

Then they'd skream: "That fat rat must be a magik rat—it's flying!"

My new girlfriend, my friend and I were all in hysteriks. Our laughter erupting unkontrollably. We'd grab each other's shoulders, gasp for air, then shove each other away when the laughter reached its limit, oxygen running low. I felt like my humour hamster had been injekting coke and was tripping over its face on the wheel, desperate for more.

Then I would diskard Rat and choose to attach an old wallet onto the line. As the same unsuspekting types walked home, after an arousing experience, they would suddenly be konfronted by a *lost wallet*. As they moved in for a quick-style payday, suddenly, the lost wallet would be a flying wallet.

"Look at that wallet man. It's fucking flying!"

We laughed so much we were aktually krying. Not one of us kould breathe. We almost giggled ourselves to a fabulous Death. If the Death of laughter was all I had to kontend with soon enough, I might have been able to live with that.

The little man in the kebab shop below, kalled Jimmy, used to walk into the street and watch us, pissing himself laughing. We were a few floors above him in terraced Georgian flats. We all had a great time for a few days.

But... Like everything else, I took it too far. I had attached New Rat (yes, genius name) to the line.

It was white, which would mean:

A: People would see New Rat klearer in the dark.

+

B: "That rat is an albino! Need to katch the dirty wee bastard!"

=

New Rat worked perfektly.

Then I kaused a bit of trouble for Jimmy—I had chosen to be out of my face on all sorts of different drugs. I was stood at my bedroom window with the fishing rod and New Rat. Opened my window to the hilt, kast New Rat out but didn't notice that there was a problem with my fishing reel. The line had fallen on the floor, and I was standing on it. As I kast New Rat, there was a snag under my feet.

The reel skreamed. The line snapped tight.

New Rat didn't fly back—it shot into the building like a bullet wrapped in greasy fur.

The sound was a small apokalypse.

What just happened?

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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I asked myself that question so many times.

Of kourse I don't have the answer to every question. I do have the answer to every question koncerning my past aktions though.

I knew very well where New Rat had ended up.

So many times—I've asked myself questions that I already knew the answer to.

Do you ever do that?

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New Rat ended up going straight through Jimmy's kebab shop window. He saved New Rat's arse by launching it back out. I quickly reeled it back in. Poor New Rat required life-saving surgery later that day. Luckily for my pretend pet, I had been a boy skout when I was younger and knew how to sew.

Jimmy was mega-pissed off. Unknown to me, he had phoned my landlord to komplain. If only the Death of respekt for my landlord was the only Death I had to live with soon enough. I attached New Rat again, waiting for my next viktim. Heard the key in the lock and thought it was one of my flatmates. Suddenly, I was in my bedroom, telling my landlord: "It wasn't me!" The evidence sat blatantly at my feet. New Rat was trying to find a hole to piss off into, trembling with fear, but was still attached to my fishing line and the unfortunate thing had to take a dressing down too.

She had two men with her who were in tears of laughter. One at each side of her, akting like bad little boys who kouldn't stop laughing in the headmaster's office. She was the only person who wasn't having fun. In fakt, she was absolutely livid. Almost phoned the police. She said: "You are a disgusting boy," even though I was apparently a man. *Apparently.* Eventually, they disappeared. New Rat looked up at me and smiled.

I felt guilty about Jimmy. He'd been asking for me to paint him a kanvas for a few weeks prior to the New Rat mishap. I didn't think I was allowed in his shop. Didn't want to make an arse of myself, so I chose to give back what I had taken. On the end of my fishing line was a kool painting for Jimmy. I dropped it down and it dangled outside his shop for a minute. He kame out smiling and looking up. Saluted me and took his prize off the line.

Asymmetrik forgiveness.

Next time I saw Jimmy was in his shop. My painting was hung, and he was uber-proud of it.

The prostitutes on the street loved Rat and New Rat. I bekame famous in the lokality as "Rat's Dad." But I gave Rat and New Rat up for adoption and took more drugs. My poor Rat children.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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I was so good at having fun. Yes, my life was an abomination, but I kould pull laughter out of my hell and emblazon it throughout the world.

Yes, I kould have dealt with the Death of laughter back then. I would just have turned it into the joke to end all jokes and laughed inside. I chose to play the silly rat game. I knew it was harmless. Jimmy's window was an akcident. But I was playing with the Death of choice. It wasn't gone kompletely, but it was rotting when it kame to narkotiks.

Drug [ab]use kills choice—the right, the wrong, and even the in-between—each dies a bastard of a Death. I disregarded everything else to get high. I chose what happened next to an extent. I didn't choose it all, but yes, I fired the first shot.

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In the same flat, the next day, the new semi-permanent girlfriend and I were having sex for hours. New relationship syndrome. Lots of weird sex toys and pain etc. Then we ran low on drugs. My phone was out of power and I kouldn't find a charger. That meant I kouldn't kall anyone for more mind-altering substances. Trouble. She had a great idea—her friend always had drugs, he'd kome down and we kould have a good krack with him. All good for me. Drugs were still the most important thing in my life and the promise of mdma and valium was too good to turn down. I made the choice against my gut. My konscience—I mean, it nagged: *No!*
However, a good idea was a good idea.

The guy kame and we got high with those funky narkotiks and listened to Arab Strap – *Philophobia*. Musik that is perfekt for taking downers. Low Scottish akcent, guitar khords ekhoing through the krematorium—like a million spiders looking for a new nest to inhabit.

Distant.

Mesmerizing.

Ekhoing infinitely.

Komfort.

I was falling asleep to folk musik that wasn't folk musik, but was folk musik, in a pekuliar, Scottish way. Downright dark and honest musik. Kould I have lived with the Death of musik? No. Never. I was getting tired—needed sleep—told her. We all went to the bedroom and lay on a huge king-size bed to sleep. I was in the middle, she was to my right, her friend to my left.

Then I was sleeping. In my dream, I was having sex with her. She was on top, easing herself up me so slowly. Staring me direktly in the eye. So beautiful. I wanted to be inside those few sekonds forever.

Suddenly, she aged—skin sagging, bones krumbling—until she rotted away to nothing.

I kould hear the musik, still karving shapes out of the ether. Resonating through the room and my soul. I immediately stretched my right arm out and felt her warm body. Still alive. Weird, I kould still feel her fucking me, but she was right next to me. She definitely wasn't dead. Was it me who was dead? Something, maybe nothing, was wrong. It smelled like a body that had been thrown into a grave that was never filled in. Everything seemed to be wrong, but I had no idea why. What was happening? Struggling to wake. I kouldn't quite fathom.

Kouldn't...

Didn't...

What the...

What the fuck?

Horror! It was her friend wank-raping me! A sex krime.

My brain began to malfunktion due to Abjekt Rage—I wanted to kill him—but kouldn't hit him. All elbows, knees and little mop-top-hairdo. I wanted to use a cheese grater on his kneekaps. I kouldn't do it. Wanted to open my mouth and spray my stomakh's kontents all over his kute little

face. Then I began blaming myself, wanted to be judged for every krime I'd ever kommitted and get the lethal injektion out of the way. I wanted nothing but nothing in the most profound sense.

Then he smirked.

The bastard had the cheek to smirk.

As if he was better than me.

No. Not after that.

Not ever, aktually.

I took him to the door and threw the bastard out.

Arab Strap still played in the background. Goddamned modern musik systems and their repeat funktion. I suppose it made sense (Fear of Love). Only, it wasn't only love that I feared. I feared life as much.

Knock.

Knock.

Knock.

"Look, I'm so sorry, but I left my packet of Marlboro Lights. Please?"

I kouldn't believe that a person would help themselves to my dick. To be back at my door for shitty cigarettes was deranged dekorum—drastik enough to chew on bomb damage. I said what I had to say: "If you don't get out my face, I will smash your head off every step on the way down the steps. You're getting fuck all. I kaught you wanking me off when I was sleeping you snivelling little kunt! Fuck off!" If I didn't spit it out my mouth, then the chances were, it would have kome out in the exakt manner I was desperately trying to avoid.

My girlfriend was sitting on the bed, wide-eyed, horrified, half frozen.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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Make me angry—fine—I'll walk away and be angry. Violate me like that? No. That's where I draw the line. Due to who and what I was, I lacked the ability to do the right thing. In those moments, I looked outward, not inward. What's the right thing? Who gets to decide? Me?

Bad Idea, as you will soon find out.

He went. I have no idea if he thought or knew how wrong he was. What I do have an idea about is this—he kuts your hair; you trust him to do his job; he gets one of his little scissor klickers to make you a kup of tea; he asks how your parents or children are; then he touches your head with the same hands that touched my dick.

Although you have no idea what he aktually is—you trust him. You have lots of idea that I am walking amongst you. We have no idea what else is walking amongst us. He was so kind, karing, konflikted, kunning and dangerous. I have no idea where he is, if he's alive, or full-time dead.

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We went for a drive to the beach in her kar later that same morning. I told her everything and asked her: “What’s attraktive about someone lying sleeping? Dirty fucking sex-pest bastard! I feel like skrubbing my dick with a wire brush and a bleach and sulphurik acid kocktail!"

She retorted, in her middle-klass Aberdeen akcent: "Don't say stuff like that. He's going to pay for this! Kreepy little bastard. I am so sorry that my friend did this to you."

"Don't say sorry please, it wasn't your fault. I really wish tonight had never happened. Although that would mean I wouldn't be sitting here with you now."

Then she said five horrible words that frayed my nerves in the salt-water laced wind: "I love you so much."

"Emm... I love you too." I had only known her a kouple of weeks.

If you hear me say “Emm”*—I’m rekonsidering everything at the same time.*

She was verging on sickly-sweet supportive. Looking out the kar window, the grey sea of Aberdeen looked so inviting. For a few brief moments, I wanted to be under it all. Dead and at the bottom of the North Sea. I’d never been sexually molested before. Never have since. Her support didn't last long. The Death of her support wouldn't have bothered me at all. The entire situation was horrible. However, I had so much dark shit going on regarding drug[s], Rat[s] and Death[s], that I got over it quickly enough. Yes, that’s right. I got over it. But not—ever—what I did in retaliation.

A few days later, I was in a TV shop. I had damaged the TV in her house when I was in full-on-fucked-up-mode on heroin and valium. She was not impressed by my idiotik behaviour. I would have bought one anyway, it was just the right thing to do, but everything was beginning to feel a little leaned on. There was a kool black TV at the back of the shop. To get to it, I had to walk down a kauldron of TV noise. There was so much information koming in from different angles.

It all bekame too much.

I stopped in the aisle:

“**Eeekekkshhht:** a man.”

“**WANNNNeeeeWeeeesh:** went into a house.”

“**EeeeqCHHHH:** sexual abuse.”

“**AIGGGGeeeeeh:** blackmail that wank-raping bastard.”

"ChKtPPPTKffff t: trauma rekovery.”

"NNNNNEEKeccccccch: there are survivors like you.”

Wait.
Go back a kouple of dodgy TVs.
I heard the words “blackmail that wank-raping bastard.”
That was a krime in which I saw a way to make him pay.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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Would you prefer that I broke his jaw?

Now you're thinking: *You kould have told the police.*

Really? Due to the sordid existence I had embedded myself in, telling the police was not even konsidered, that's kalled "grassing." After I grassed, I'd have to go to kourt and spill my guts, about being wanked off by a kute little man I'd went to bed with. Any lawyer with a mere hint of being good at their job would have gotten him off. It doesn't take a genius to work that one out. I began blackmailing him, did so whenever I felt like it. I remember my thought process to this day—*Never mind what you did, never mind her. Be sure to mind that little bastard wank-raped you and hurt your pride. This must be done. You deserve everything he owns.*

✯✯✯

A month or so later, she was still being nice or thought she was. I was kaught inside the striptease of suspicion. She said: "You have got to promise you won't skrew any more money off him now please. He's only a hairdressers' manager. You've seen the shitload of drugs he takes. He won't be able to pay eventually. He is giving you *EVERYTHING!*"

"He hasn't paid enough. I went to jail for lesser krimes. And you mean the same drugs that got me wank-raped?" She still seemed very pushy; I was getting more suspicious with each dying minute. I had processed the blackmail venture thoroughly and kome to a final decision on the matter—I was going to skrew him until he had run out of threads to skrew.

"Stop it! That's enough. Promise?"

"I promise." I said what she wanted to hear (my lies).

She stared straight into my despikable soul: "I love you!"

"Emm. Eh," still rekonsidering everything at the same time. No—I'd be lying if I said that at this point. I was getting pissed off but trying to skate through the iced-up-lake of komplicity.

Two weeks later, I krashed her kar into the head of the STV North, wife's kar on my way down to the university to present my BBC North Industrial Placement, funnily enough. The woman didn't find it funny. She hit me with a bill for a fortune. Just as well I was still up to my neck in blackmail, and my abuser was aktually paying to get the kar fixed.

A kouple of days later, I fell asleep in the park when I was walking my girlfriend's mum's dog. Then I was in withdrawals and she said something that I had never even konsidered: "You hate yourself!"

"I do not! I'm quite happy with me to be honest." I was to an extent.

"You have an ugly soul. I know!" Spot on, but she was supposed to kare, supposed to love.

"What a nice thing for my girlfriend to say! Thank God I've got you babe!"

She was looking at me with pity, bordering patronisation. Finally hit me with the famous last words: "I am not your babe. Not anymore!" And then a final punch in the throat on a kold winter morning: "And get my bloody kar fixed!"

"Never gonna happen! I have drugs to buy. Even if I didn't—I wouldn't!"

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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I kould say sorry about not getting her kar fixed, but I reckon you know me well enough by now to know I wouldn't mean it. What I do mean is—right now—I am turning my soul inside out for you. I am interrogating my own soul. If I was an American president or vice-president, I might ask you to be grateful, but I don't want or expekt your thanks. I have done some horrible things in my life. I am now willing to tell the world everything. I am doing this for so many different reasons, all of them good. This is not for me in financial terms. I am exorcising myself. It needs to be done and it needs to be done properly. I have no other way.

They are probably friends again. Reminiscing over the time they eskaped that bastard. His dick just ended up in her best friend's hands during the night. He'd say: "Yesssss. I kouldn't believe it when I woke up. I thought it was my phone that I had in my hand." Bullshit. My retaliation was abhorrent and disgusting, however. I had never been in a situation where someone did something awful to me and I kouldn't lash out. I needed to kry in her arms—but it was dead—I had no-one.

There is a huge difference between what I'd like to do (just imagine), and what I need to do (live with it). Drugs distorted that difference. Drugs stripped me bare of my bastard superhero outfit and left an emotionally young boy standing at the window naked. Even the hardest parts of me bekame hollow and worthless. Drug abuse blurs morals. Murders understanding of decency.

I might have fallen in love with her. But not when it was pushed that way.

I suffered immense konsequences when I entered the grave of choice and slowly filled it in. Choice bekame a fossilised relik of a raging storm of filth. Choice meanders through life. Sometimes revealing, teasing, sometimes not. We are all kapable of making the right choice—it isn't a fucking lottery.

All I kan give you is Abjekt Honesty—when I chose to follow my konscience—I followed dignity and beauty. When I chose not to—it delivered Abjekt Konsequence. A dilemma—to do, or not to do. To not do is to take a chance. To do is also to take a chance.

To know the outkome would be as klose to God as any human being.

☆☆☆

Death Four

Abjekt Honesty 4.1-1
There is only torture, bullshit, murder, stealing and kontrol freaks.
They all dance together with Death.
A man entered their kingdom of filth one day.
He exited in a body bag.
Then he woke up and exited the body bag too.

Soundtrack: Bonnie Prince Billy – *Death to Everyone*.
“So strap me on, and raise me high,
'Cause buddy, I'm not afraid to die.
But life is long, and it's tremendous
and we're glad that you're here with us
and since we know an end will come,
It makes our living fun.”

AnnoDomini[atrix] 2007-2008

I moved out of the Aberdeen city-centre flat and into a house with two nurses near Rubislaw Quarry. It was an expensive area to live in, but I found that if I took all of my student loans out of the bank the day it was paid, I kould go to the university's hardship fund and they would top me back up. I thought I was so above being normal at that point that I decided to show off my newfound fortune[s] by having two girlfriends, instead of just one.

One was Scottish, blonde, krystal blue eyes and inkredibly beautiful, but was kold hearted—not a nurse. The other was an Irish brunette, deep brown eyes, very pretty, very kind, empathetik, loving—most importantly—she was a saver of lives and wanted to save mine. A real nurse.

At the end of our final year, the lovely Irish girl had the horrendous misfortune of being the one I chose to go home with. We went to her family home in Dublin, towards the end of the year. I did okay at first—organizing klub nights, designing flyers, sharpening the teeth of their over-fed, but still ravenous, *Celtic Tiger*. I was also working at a printing kompany owned by her unkle.

I also got involved in [dis]organised krime and made a fortune that I kouldn't handle having. Sat in a krack den one night, smoking and injekting the stuff. I noticed it was a three-storey krack den. I said: "Who's house is this?" A little guy kame over and told me it was left to him in his mother's will. I had over £50,000 in my bank after my gran had died and left it to me. He wasn't going to get it all and I wanted to see how cheap I kould purchase a house for, so I offered him 15,000 Euros the next day. I would pay the lawyer fees etc, obviously. We agreed and celebrated with more krack. The irony of buying a dead person's house with a dead person's money didn't eskape me at the time. I was even dealing with Death.

I sold it to a guy who had introduced himself to me as: "A businessman. Not a fucking kriminal," a few days later. Money was a little sailing boat in a storm, taking me to places and people I wish I'd never experienced at all. The truth is—I did. Loaded, I bekame a weapon: hurting others, buying more poison, feeding the vicious machine of my own destruktion.

Danger signs appeared like falling asleep at the xmas dinner table. My face was embedded in turkey, beef, roast potatoes, various yellow and green vegetables; all soaked in thick gravy. The new girlfriend's mother who sang in a chapel every day, and her brother—a priest who worked behind the walls for the Irish prison service's religious nonsense—woke me up. All I kould feel was vile gravy bubbling under my nose and mouth. They weren't pleased. I said sorry and that I was tired. Then went back to sleep in the disgusting turkey. My girlfriend woke me up after they'd gone to bed. I went outside for a joint, kame back in, and went back to sleep on the dead father's armchair. Xmas with me must have been such a great family okkasion. Poor people.

Thanks to my new extra-kurrikular aktivities, I was always on kall, xmas day or not. One of those little bleeper devices that told me to kall a number. The gangster (that's what he kalled himself once I knew him) I worked for loved the fakt that I would do almost anything. I was konstantly driving shitloads of kokaine, sometimes money and guns, across the city.

Sure as Hell, I got a bleep. Spoke to a shady man, who asked me to drive to some shithole or other. I left the wonderful nurse all alone at midnight.

Every drug known to man entered my mutating bloodstream.

One night around that time, another drug addikt and I smoked 6000 Euros worth of krack between 1900 and 0300. That reads like a lie when I look at it written down. But if there is money available to do so, ask any drug addikt if they kould manage that amount without financial konstraints. I'm sure half of them would probably tell you they kould smoke more. Desperate and dekadent dedikation is all that is required. I sank into drugs, down to a depth so dismal, it makes no sense to me now.

While still in the throes of pleasure, a few days after the krack monster session, I lost fokus and got shot on the thigh by a very sorry little man. Two maniaks, who also worked for the so-kalled gangster, and I were walking up a hill in Gardner Street in Dublin. I saw this man akross the street—thought he was pointing at me for some strange reason. Then I felt a thud on the top of my left thigh. At first, I thought it was my ko-pilot who punched me as we walked, and was just about to begin shouting at him, but the pain and blood told me otherwise. The three of us ended up like magnets, on the wheel arches of two kars parked on the street. Bullets were flying around our heads like sunburned summer wasps.

Death was watching. Waiting.

We had a little team of three bekause one man karried the guns for the two who might have to shoot the guns. It made sense, with regards police searches. The noise of shoppers, kars and buses, blended into an aural kollage of city life, punktuated by gunshots. It was supposed to be Dublin, not Cape Town or Tijuana! I shouted to my ko-pilot, who was glued to the wheel arch like a terrified mannequin, to throw me a gun. He pulled a *What the fuck?* face. So dim-witted and slow. When the useless bastard finally obeyed, I got up, feeling the atmosphere tear around me as bullets flew past.

The first shot I fired wasn't a shot at all—only in my head. Fucking safety katch!

The guy was trying to kill me.

What was I meant to do? Ask politely?

I fired three times:

Bang))))))))))))))))))

Bang))))))))))))))))))

Bang))))))))))))))))))

A bullet kaught him high—tore his upper right chest wide—definitely not down to my marksmanship skills. Just luck, if you want to kall it that. I am a terrible shot. If I am honest, I think it was the third time I had ever fired a gun. It flung him backwards like he'd been rejekted by gravity.

A man's man when he was pointing a gun at me. Now wailing on the pavement—auditioning it seemed, for an assassin internship I was not offering.

Piss off to the back of the queue.

He disappeared off to the hospital.

I ran behind a children's hospital, bleeding so badly I was almost mesmerized—watching blood piss out my leg and down a drain. A life down the drain. In the most explicit, literal sense.

Was he aiming for my dick? Was what I kept asking myself. Personally, I wouldn't. But people are just people. I have no idea what's in their heads—only my own.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

I never set out to put a bullet in a man's chest. I would never do such a thing if there was any other choice. Maybe he was aiming for my dick. I don't know. If I hadn't akted, I truly believe I wouldn't be here. I took in the variables and adapted. I didn't want to—I had to.

No guilt. It was twenty years ago. Why would I feel guilty about saving my own life?

There are moments when I think: *Shouldn't have done that, or that, even that.*

I survived, despite the savagery of my life.

Whatever existence vomits—step over it and move forward. Leave it behind. History is great, but what is important is the present. We don't live in yesterday. We live in today.

There are very, very few things I regret. Not this.

I suppose the best way to interrogate my soul over this is to ask—if this happened now, what would I do? Exaktly the same thing

☆☆☆

Permanent Liminance

AbjeKt Honesty 4.1-2
I am hard pressed between every world.
My desire is to depart and be with Pops,
for that is far better.
But, for now, I will exist in permanent liminance.

Soundtrack: Portishead – *The Rip*
"Through the glory of life,
I will scatter on the floor,
disappointed and sore,
and in my thoughts I have bled,
for the riddles I've been fed,
another lie moves over."

Inside the darkest depths of guilt,
truths rot unspoken—
multi-faceted klauses, I wish I kould outrun.
My deviance holds krushed and ground bones of fate.
I am the whisper inside the blueprint's skream—
not broken, not wrong—
just something never planned for.
I exist in permanent liminance:
A ghost kaught between every world ever imagined.
An evolutionary frakture.
A fucking abnormality.
Should've died twenty years ago,
all my friends are dead or in jail.
I'm a prisoner of distant deviation,
tugging, pulling,
whispering the okkult,
pushing me over the edge.
I exist in permanent liminance:
A rabbit in the deadlight's indecision.
Addiktion doesn't teach—
not until it owns your soul.
Doesn't skrew, drills through flesh and bones,
won't let go until you fold.
By the time I realised, I was bound.
Body tied, Mind fried.
My soul sighed,
sick to Death of lies
I exist in permanent liminance:
A lie in the kingdom of truth.
Kould've tried harder.
Only tried myself.
I'm a twisted skar—
a warped, gold-blooded transkription on a gravestone,
mocking kommunity with the impunity,
granted to me by me.
Never akcepted. Never expekted. Always rejekted.
I adapted.

I exist in permanent liminance:
A bible in hell, untouched by fire.
Undecided. Resolutely divided. Socially derided.
Abjektly Unfit for life's kollisions.
It shouldn't have happened—but it did.
Inside my self-destruktion,
something stirred—
a faint twitch,
a whisper of flame flickering in seawater.
I exist in permanent liminance:
The beauty in all hunger.
Odds demanded my blood.
Choices signed the warrant.
Here I stand. Look—
I am Death in human form.
But even darkness holds a spark.
No matter how far gone you think you are—
rekovery is possible.
I exist in permanent liminance:
Addiktion's end by default.
Graves lining my path,
no longer swallow Death—
now puke up love.
Dark yet burning bright.
Love is real—even in the dark—even at the end.
I'm frozen in koncern for a child,
lost in a maze of kandyfloss and razorblades.
I exist in permanent liminance:
An adult with the heart of a child.
Dread purges my soul.
Anxieties of self-propagated misery
delay my eternal question—
will I ever feel whole?
You don't need to pity me.
I already do, as hard as it is.
Poor child, poor little me.
I exist in permanent liminance:
A baby wolf in the nest of a sparrow.

I achieved what I should not.
Not gold. Never sold. Just bold.
Forget the stories told.
Let me in.
I've waited too long—been kold for years.
Won't be a kure, only a fakt—
an Abjekt Fakt.
Graffiti skrawled through eternal tunnels of light and Death.
I exist in permanent liminance:
The apokalyptik birth of Death.

Here I stand,
shining like akrylik paint thrown akross another sky.
Distant. Bright. Projekting every light.
Whoever tripped this fuse in me—
tear out the doubt with your teeth.
My veins are rivers the dead krawl to,
drinking light until their bones ignite.
I exist in permanent liminance:
The Life within Death's shadow.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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I just spoke to you, and I wasn't telling you what I done, but where I exist. Maybe I trust you. I suppose I must trust everyone who reads this. You've wandered, unpaid, into a maniak's soul. Yes, I trust you. Maybe. Probably. Okay, *fuck's sake*—Yes—I trust you.

☆☆☆

As I stood bleeding behind the hospital, through a random window, I saw a nurse dancing between four beds of little children with bald heads—little kancer patients. It was like a scene from Bedknobs and Broomsticks, or Mary Poppins, but it wasn't. It was real. I had no right to have a hole in my leg treated in such a vivid and heart-breaking way, so I just stood watching. They were astonishingly beautiful to me at that moment—still to this day. I realised, after all, that I was human. There were pain and longing in my heart—it wasn't all about me. Those little children were what made me suffer that day, not a 9mm hole in my thigh. What did I want? I wanted them to be upright. Alive. Happy. Not suffering. I wanted to swap places with them all. I want them to be alive. Not fucking dead. But that wasn't real. I was alive and I had no idea why. I stood broken, krying and dying.

Even kute-old-grandpa-vampire Pops wouldn't kross that line. This ghastly existence teaches nothing but want—never need. The vampires, once human, kontinue to teach me how it's all done. They need. They don't want. Even when they are krippled by need, they wouldn't touch brave little babies. Logik and decency are so underrated.

I passed out.

Was picked up unkonscious by people I worked with and bundled into the back of an extremely expensive kar, which I had to wash my blood off a few days later. They took me to a huge, dekrepit, awaiting demolition, block of flats in Ballymun, north Dublin. The same flat that I used to pick up kokaine and guns from a nice old lady in. There was a Polish doktor on my boss's payroll. He kouldn't work in the kountry due to license restriktions. I remember waking up on a kitchen table with skary men I knew, standing smoking. It looked like one of those old-skhool operations, where the surgeon's krowd was like a packed kourtroom—watching every move.

I suffered for ages in agonizing pain and infektion. Was on the verge of breaking every rule in the playbook of [dis]organised krime and admitting myself to hospital. My leg smelled like Death.
I made it home with nineteen grand from my boss—even more money to shove into my veins. It was better than exkruciating pain in vain, I suppose. If I kould have paid it all to enable the children to get better, I'd have donated both the money and my other leg. Yes, my heart too.
I would have done that then.
Almost 20 years ago.

I would do it right now.

No reluktance.

Immediately.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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Little babies. So pure. No choice in the matter. When I measure their ends against my own—the void feels like a betrayal woven into the fabrik of my soul. Reason absent. Treason nascent. Why them and not me?

In that fleeting moment—I had no right to even witness such innocence. No right to be alive while they suffered. The kruel paradox is this: I chose to bekome addikted to drugs, to kondemn myself, and to get involved in that gruesome world. Why?

The truth—it was easier drug money. That's the weight of my devastation and the infinite depth of my guilt. They were denied any choice at all. Their human right ripped away. Their Deaths—a kruelty beyond measure. A theft unspoken.

Here I am, an old man, burdened by the same question—would I trade places with them? Every minute of every day. But I kannot. That is the malice of life—answers never kome, and meaning is never given.

If I had the power, they would ascend to something beyond divine. Not Gods in the traditional sense, something greater. Way beyond what we know or believe.

Maybe, somewhere else, they'll get what's right.

I doubt it, but that maybe keeps me sane when I think of them.

✯✯✯

And still, I failed to learn any lessons. A kouple of weeks after being shot, I was walking home after a drug binge and was assaulted by a few idiots. They threw me into the back of a van and blindfolded me. The laughing fuckwits then put me in a freezing kold room, attempting to torture me with elektricity. They were trying to find out where the nice old lady that I picked up guns and drugs from lived. The fakt that my life had been saved on her kitchen table two weeks before, emboldened my defiance. My upper chest had been kut with a razor blade, they put two sparking ends of wire into the wound, and konnekted me to a kar battery. It was horrendously painful, but survivable. They were searching for a bag of nerves that they were inkapable of finding. That's why I say they were idiots—kouldn't even torture me properly. It felt like a kontinuos elektrik shock from a vibrating plug. My sight turned all silver. I kould only hear the hum and their laughs. They were getting nothing but skreams of agony. Abjekt Defiance in motion. Stubborn bastard, I am.

My pulse raged and engaged a specifik spot—it was especially sore in my upper left-thigh area. Then I remembered—*Oh shit! I have a putrid infektion.* I had kompletely forgotten that someone shot my leg two weeks earlier. Given the grim reality of my kurrent situation, it passed me by. I kould barely see through the eye-gag, but witnessed the distress of the wound, seeping into my jeans. So—I thought quickly. My dick was on the same side as the septik mess, which made the decision simple: piss myself and hide the poison leaking from my thigh. If they found it, they wouldn't need to bother with elektricity. They'd dig straight into my rot. If that happened, I've no doubt I would have spilled my guts to anyone asking about the weather, what time it was, or where I got my koat. Nice old lady's life or not. They laughed, thinking they'd made me piss all over my leg. A khorus of evil laughter in a very mediokre torture room.

Lights out. My heart pissed off to Disneyland and left me in Dublin all alone. Bastard thing.

They kouldn't let me die—not with no plausible reason—or my boss would have them dead in hours. So, they brought me back, only to kick me out of the back of their van later that night.

|||Thump—Lightning struck my fuse-box—Thump|||

The world between life and Death wasn't still and quiet. I was in a world of fucking ghosts again.

Sinister man ghosts were out in force that night. I followed the smell of their evil for a while. Then I followed the little girl ghosts. Their inverted smiles dripped memories like blood—I'd forgotten that my gran pointed a shotgun at me when I was at primary skhool. I loved my gran so much. She was obviously preparing me for shit like the mediokre torture arena.

All the white bed sheet ghosts were sprayed in krimson violence as always. The ghosts liked me. Like when a dog likes you, you just know. The ghosts were the same.

They krowded round.

What was I?

A sinister man ghost, but an alive one.

I liked the ghosts too. They were kute and kuddly. I kan be nice to ghosts. I kan be lovely to vampires. I kan be decent to the devil. But not people.

I heard musik—something familiar, far away. Then old Pops popped up, smiling and bopping his head, phone in hand, playing tunes. He's a big fan of Talking Heads—*Fear of Music*. I respekt a man who knows where to go with that band. I say this with hindsight: if they'd tapped deeper into New York's *underground* scene when they first started, they might've been great—not only good. Money does that to people.

Thank God I've never kared about being rich. That's why you're reading this, and not some kute, ghost-written, appealing book about drugs.

Animals is Talking Heads' best track. If you dig it too, check out the DNA kompilation—*On DNA*. Harsher than Talking Heads, the same city—but more outlandish, komplikated and animated. The klue is in the genre name, where Talking Heads was *New Wave*, DNA is *No Wave*. Pops got me into DNA. Vampires always have great taste in musik. They live for all eternity.

"Animals think they're pretty smart. Shit on the ground and see in the dark."

Was I even an animal?

Questions haunt me—more than every ghost in this ugly bastard of a world.

They linger, dark shadows stamping my chest like guilt's marching band.

` They interrogate and devastate.

If you answer every question, you bekome the owner of your soul.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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Would I torture someone?

Yes—if I had to. Of kourse I would. *For fuck's sake*—torture kan mean survival. What I wouldn't do is waste it. Not a whisper of pain to the living—or the dying—unless it served purpose.

Only self-styled gangsters do that. It's about proportion: the line between justice and barbarism.

Why inflikt suffering without necessity?

Only idiots, kowards and sadists do that.

Know this—decent people live at peace under my rules. When I was younger, they didn't. And Death kame in abundance. Destruktion, despair and dereliktion followed. So I learned.

Only inhumanity suffers on my watch. Never the innocent. Innocence is untouchable.

That's the line I won't kross—bekause I know exaktly what happens when you do.

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A few weeks later, I was in my boss's office. He was blood-red with rage: "What happened last night? The truth!" Kold eyes, staring straight into my bag of sinful tricks.

"I'm really sorry. There was a shitload of filth all over the joint kos I phoned a bomb hoax for every pub in a street in Drumcondra. I kouldn't believe they took it so seriously. Mad bastards, eh?" Just the truth he asked for. Thought he'd find it funny.

"Why did you phone a bomb hoax? My wife and children were four hours late koming back from that holiday! Never mind the extra info you use to dampen the stupidity of what you are telling me! I want the fakts. Did you get arrested?"

I remember feeling surprised by his building tension. I thought it was okay to phone a bomb hoax. "No. Every time I phoned my dealer, it rang out. All I knew was that he was in a pub on that street. I told the filth that there was a bomb in every pub. Easy as. I wanted him off his fat arse and back at work." In my mind, drug dealers were drug shops that should be open 24/7.

"Are you gone in the head? Look... *Wow!* Don't fucking laugh! You are too good at what you do for me to tell you to bolt, or I would."

He was playing the *I employ you* kard. The truth? I went through people's lives like they were lacklustre heroin—dull hits for a dull akhe, not even worth the vein. I did a lot of wrong for this man and was getting pissed off by how seriously he was taking my bomb hoax stunt.

"No one else would do what I do you mean. Surely there is understanding. I made a mistake!" By now I was in full-on bullshit mode.

"Who do you think you are? You stopped an entire city from getting home bekause *you* wanted drugs! I had everyone on the phone asking me what to do! This is not good!" Neither was the fakt that my drug-dealer worked for him.

"I know it was wrong—I was desperate. Maybe you kould tell my dealer he should work instead of sitting on his fat arse drinking. I mean, he asked if it was me who did it and I told him straight—*'Everyone would be in a warm house, not waiting for armed response and bomb squad if you let me skore!'* He was not impressed, and it pissed me off. And you sell drugs to this shithole city!" Just the truth. Truth or bullshit. I sold both. No change in tone.

"Oh. It pissed you off? What about every other soul in this city? This is madness. I never gave you a job so you kould rip the hole out of every arse you kome akross. Anyway, the rush hour has slowed. I want you to go to Fatima. Pick up some shit. Take your ko-pilot. And I don't sell drugs!"—Liar with a kapital L.

"Then what am I picking up if it isn't shitty kokaine? And why him? That twitch of doubt—one breath—too slow sliding the Beretta, nearly signed my fucking Death warrant!"

"Wait a minute. Stop! I will not sit here and listen to your bullshit. You gave him the job and now you're moaning like a kunt to me! My entire city was drenched in filth bekause of *you* and *your* shite!" It was beginning to sink in, slowly. Shit, what had I done?

"Okay. But why don't you sack him? I need people I kan trust. I want a new ko-pilot. That soup smells alright. Any left?" I was hungry after all. Prime example of me deflekting importance with stupidity.

"I kan't believe the sheer audacity of you! Sack him if you want!"

"I'm sick of people I don't know! I suppose he saved my life in a way. That hesitation could've killed me though. I will sack him when we get back from Fatima. Useless little bastard!" And he was.

"Piss off out of my sight! Do what you want with him."

"That's too much power for me. He'll end up in the river. No eyes and a half-pecked soul."

"Don't you dare! This konversation is over. Go on—piss off!"

"What kar do you want me to take? It's freezing!"

"Mr Bomb Hoax... Piss off out my sight! I'll get them to plug *you* and throw *you* in the Liffey! Get a fucking taxi!"

A *fucking taxi* kost around 100 Euros.

He was paying for it anyway.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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My poor unfortunate boss.

Not really. There was fuck all unfortunate about him except his wife and kids.

A gangster, but a lazy, self-righteous bastard. Too arrogant to be good at it, too brutal to know the difference. He thought he was a king. Too important to kare about the human beings who were torn to shreds for him. He sat on his sekond-hand kar salesman's podium of dereliktion and malediktion. Always stinking of piss. An ego vortex. Swallowed everything—lives, money, morals. Didn't even take a drink of water to wash it all down.

If I—a nobody, a ghost in his shadow—wrecked so many lives, I wonder how many lives he shits out at night.

Back home in Scotland: 2007—455 drug Deaths.

☆☆☆

Death Five

Abjekt Honesty 5.1-1
People who spread narkotiks to Scottish holidaymakers shall be high-fived.
The little rowing boat men will kry.
Those who holiday on the Nile shall be shocked.
He will karry on regardless,
all the way home,
to The City of the Dead.

Soundtrack: The Gun Club – *Mother of Earth*
"I've gone down the river of sadness,
I've gone down the river of pain,
in the dark, under the wires,
I hear them call my name."

AnnoDomini[atrix]2008

I would imagine that everyone has a favourite holiday destination.

In early summer, her and I were off from the green of Ireland to the sandy shades of Egypt. That was when I fell in love with Luxor. Part of the reason being—not the Bridget Riley painting—but I kould walk into any khemist in town and buy pharmaceutikals of the highest order. Back then, doktor's preskriptions were not required in Egypt. I found out within hours that I kould take a list to a khemist and obtain every substance on that list. I was so finely attuned to drug [ab]use by then that I was the drug equivalent of a heat seeking missile.

The Nile and rather immediate attraktions are lovely enough. But, well—there is Luxor on one side of the river and then you have the *City of the Dead* on the opposite side. You kan probably guess by now where I spent huge amounts of time, alone. She bathed in the shitty sun all day long on the hotel roof. I was out on little exploration missions from 0700 and I loved the place.
For every reason.

DVD FOOTAGE STARTS:

We are all there. All of us Irish [non]citizens for the obligatory, floatadelik, hot-air-balloon ride over The Nile. The kamera is preying on people koming off the boat and up the stairs, then it zooms in on my face—I am sleeping standing up. Every drug that I kould buy from the khemists is embedded within my deranged bloodstream. The kamera pans over the *City of the Dead*, and the black, red and blue sky. The balloon is all happy, except me. Eyes klosed, miserable. They watch the Egyptian sunrise. It zooms in again—me—klimbing the basket stairs.

*****BREAK IN FOOTAGE:**

Girlfriend: "You don't look very well. And what were you doing then? Do you want to die?" She was genuinely koncerned and wanted to save me, as always.

"Never mind how well I look. Of kourse I don't want to die. I just want to get out of this basket. Feels like fucking jail. I want out! I want to be down there!" I shouted.

She looked at me like I was a patient—fucking nurse. Weird how a look kan say so many words. I was okay at that point. Just testing my boundaries.

FOOTAGE: Error. Retry***

Maybe I liked the att—(AbjeKt Hon...

Maybe ||||||||| _-=-_/////(AbjeK]]]]]]]]]]]

Help...

I need... help...

|||:::++++?***$!!^^^

FOOTAGE BEGINS AGAIN:

We end up descending over some man's house. He is sleeping in the fresh air on a silk blue bed; it's like an open-air bedroom. We get lower and lower. It looks enticing and I'm the only one on the balloon who is 30,000 ft high. I'm on kamera again straddling the basket's edge; they all think I am trying to kommit suicide. Panik erupts inside the balloon. Hands grabbing, voices pleading. They think I'm going to jump. I'm good at sh[m]ocking people. I'm laughing. I wanted to drop out of the balloon—land klean on the man's bed, wake him up and have a kup of tea with him.

:DVD FOOTAGE ENDS

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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In another life, I was a stunt man—so I tell myself. I'm thinking about it now, the tragik madness of my stunts. Was that real? No—it was beyond the horizon of real. The sort of real that guts my stomakh. Too real for peace at my funeral. Too real for komfort in my beautiful koffin.

The biggest shame of all is the shame I feel for the sleeping me while standing. Everyone else was exalted in joy—I was wrapped up tight in misery. I didn't know people kould be sleeping and standing at the same time. Not until I saw the DVD of me doing it in Luxor.

They were happy. I was klearly not. All bekause I locked myself in a kage that I kouldn't eskape.

☆☆☆

And that was the sekond morning of the holiday. That afternoon, we embarked on a three-day *Nile Kruise*. It was peaceful and dramatik and hot as the devil's tail. Dust, mountains, kolourful houses, beautiful people everywhere I looked. That didn't matter to me. Nothing mattered to me except getting to drug-heaven. I had stocked up on downers from some of the khemists. Was having a few beers from around 1600 on the top deck. I didn't even stop to take into akkount that I was filled with the pharmacy tablets, mostly sleepers; add alkohol and heat on top of the tablets and sleep appears very easily. I krashed out.

The sun gave me a life of my own. It is something that even someone as ungrateful as me appreciates. I despised the thing that evening, however. "That bastard yellow thing in the sky," was all I kould manage. My hatred lingered like the smell of bad breath. It was stuck up my nose and required an outlet with immediate effekt. I skreamed: "The Goddamned fucking sun!"

I knew I was outside but kouldn't see anything at all. Felt so hot. Inside, deep inside. Kould hear her voice somewhere. Tried to shout but it dropped off my tongue and onto my chest like the remnants of a forgotten language. My legs were on fire. My back was like wearing a skin of inverted pins. I'd never been burned by the sun in my life. It nailed me. Sun stroke really was a stroke on the chin and a half. I was literally attempting to phone people with my hands and rolling imaginary joints too. Ate all the ship's desserts when I stayed downstairs on the boat the next day. I finally appeared at the moment the sun was all red and about to hit bed. The guys in the little rowing boats, who threw up traditional dress for sale, were around and they did my head in. Skreaming, smiling and devious. Making plans for a kash withdrawal from a Scottish dude—who had to have his money in other people's akkounts—bekause he owed every bank tens of thousands. They kept chucking me Kaftans that I didn't want. I kept deliberately throwing the packages behind their little boats, so they pissed off out of my cinema skreen of a *Nile Kruise*. There were different koloured Kaftans all over The Nile. It was so amusing to me. Other passengers were kongratulating me, high fiving, for doing exaktly what they'd wanted to do for their entire time on the boat. Happy little buggers, all the same—*kontinue with your rowing and go away instead of chucking shit at me that I'm never going to buy.*

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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Ludikrous for me. A life for them. A life that did not deserve to be treated as I treated them.
What you've got to konsider is why I would akt in such a fashion.
Life was such a pain in the arse to me, that such trivialities were also a pain in the arse to me. It was all about me again. I wanted to eskape. Eskape a *Nile Kruise?* No, not exaktly. I wanted to be on the *Nile Kruise*, but on my terms, not life's terms. Everything had to suit me. Just me.
I kouldn't eskape bekause I was the prison I had locked myself in years before.

☆☆☆

By the final day of the kruise, the sun and drug induced haze had lifted just enough for me to feel—not better, just different. I was beginning to get excited I would soon be off the leash of not having enough drugs to last another full day and I kould go get sparkled on pharmaceutikal jewels again. All I had to do was ensure I had a t-shirt on. She was going to make sure I didn't sleep for more than half an hour in the sun. But I drank too much again and slept for longer bekause she had pulled over a big umbrella. We arrived at whatever port and eskaped the Nile.

On the way back to Luxor, the minibus was stopped at roadblocks.

Armed police searched us three times before we got back.

I think half of them disregarded me as a poor tourist who possibly had mental disabilities.

Lucky me.

I loved their world.

There was a part of me that wanted to stay forever.

But there was a bigger part of me that wanted to go back to Dublin and take more drugs.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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I wanted to take so many drugs that I would run out of Nile to get high on.

When a person is addikted, it doesn't matter where they are, they will do until they kannot do.

I just happen to be the type of person who kould find more ways to do than most. I thought I was smart, and in many ways, I was. But that intelligence enabled me to kontinue destroying both myself and everything around me at the skale you are reading.

Abjekt Honesty—if I had not been gifted with such intelligence, most of this would not have happened. That's also why I struggle with rekovery from substance [ab]use today. I kan think my way around it. I see invisible holes that bekome wider and deeper the more I think into them. I start with a one-centimetre-long hole, by the time I am finished analysing it, the hole is miles wide and new holes have appeared.

If a person is as extreme as myself—gifts kan be kurses.

☆☆☆

Abjekt Konfessions

Abjekt Honesty 5.1-2
Therefore, I'll konfess my sins to you,
and you'll pray for me to die full-time.
But the prayer of most is powerless and grossly ineffektive.
Are you righteous?
Then I may be in trouble.
Although, I doubt it.

Soundtrack: Patrick Wolf – *The Childcatcher*
"I was still a child when you caught me,
and tied me to your bed.
You gave me shoes and pretty clothes,
and I gave you what I had between my legs.
Just a rite of passage,
you held me down and said
"I'm gonna be your rite of passage,
so boy you better spread, spread em."

I was drawn to Abjekt Khaos like an infektion to a weak immune system **[True—kaught, not chosen].**

Manipulation? I try not to, but my mind must be so used to it that I get karried away and do it subkonsciously. Yes—I still do that **[True].**

Threatening kourt witnesses? "They've got the wrong man!" **[Lie]**.

Police assault? Four in one day. Found not-guilty four times: "Obviously wasn't me" **[Lie].**

If there was a fire, I'd show up to watch it burn. Never komplicit: "Just an observer" **[Lie].**

If there was a robbery: "I was klose by minding my own business" **[Lie].**

Drugs were lost and found—well, not found, robbed from dealers. Lost just as often **[True].**

Ugly and horrifik violence? I was in the area: "Never involved" **[Lie].**

Vandalism? Up I would pop: "Nothing to do with me though!" **[Lie].**

Black Magi[c]k? "I wouldn't get involved with stuff like that" **[Uh huh, sure thing. Meet me in the graveyard at midnight].**

A kar krash? Yes, a few. I enjoyed krashing kars, and some were deliberate **[True].**

Vampirism? You will be interested to know that Pops is not only a metaphor.
I have drunk people's blood **[True—I find it really nice and still eat raw steak].**

This is Abjekt Honesty after all.
Work out yourself if I am lying.
I am not seeking absolution.
I am seeking the opposite of forgiveness.
A rite without passage.
Kaught, never chosen.
Spread thin, not wide.

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I was so deeply embedded in uber-disturbing behaviours, I kould no longer tell the difference between right and wrong. In many ways, I still struggle.

Even now, I think to myself—*without your Special Death, what would you be?*

After My Special Death, my dad said to me: "It was best thing that ever happened to you!"

Maybe my dad was righter than I have ever been.

Maybe.

☆☆☆

After finding nihil but sunstroke on the Nile, I was sat in some shitty Luxor art gallery with a newfound friend and said: "I'm having trouble getting ketamine from khemists. I'm thinking you kould put me in touch with a vet. One who works with farm animals?"

"Hmm. Mebeee!" The guy was an Egyptian art dealer who I got klose to for my own reasons in Luxor. He would see what he kould do. I was to pop in bright and early the next day. I ventured off to multiple khemists to do my daily shopping for pharmaceutikal treasures. Then I walked back to have dinner with her on the hotel roof.

Next day, I got up knowing the guy would be able to point me towards someone or other. Was up and walking in the early morning sweat drench in no time. Marching down the street and watching my rainbow New Balance walk all the way to his piss-poor little gallery. I klocked him, walked over and said: "Did you manage to konnekt me with a vet?" He started yapping, grinning, and offering me kups of tea. Then he ordered one of his little helpers to get me some fresh baked kakes.

"I don't want any of your baked little kakes. Send me to a vet with ket, *for fuck's sake!*" I shouted at him. His big, pleading Egyptian eyes were after something. I kould sense it just as the words rolled off my tongue.

"Kan I have your mp3 player pleeeease? I kan't get one like that in this shitty kountry man!" Bastard. He didn't see me koming—the wise Egyptian soul saw the mp3 player koming. Top marks on the long kon. I tended to my hatred for shit like that klash of wants and gave him the mp3 player. He had been a good go-to for me.

He told me where to find a vet to get ket from. Everything was groovy and shit. On the way akross town, I stopped off at three khemists. Then I had a drink or ten. Walking, walking, walking, and I was taking in all the talking, talking, talking. The abrupt stop/start rhythms of an ancient city—a riot of kolours, grins and white teeth everywhere, prayer kalls in the distance, men with thin kows and big sticks to whip them or prod them in the right direktion. I stared at the path, looked up every now and then to katch the eyes of strangers who smiled back. I fokused on my trainers but had the thought I should at least try to be a human being. Was sukcessful with the fokusing but failed on the human part, as usual. Was feeling quite *normal* again. The downers were kicking through my fucked-up system. Beautiful place. Another little drink before moving between pubs. More drink. I went to a klub. They played what I didn't think they would play: Death in Vegas – *Rekkit.* I was happy with that, so I stayed. Then it hit me—*Shit! The vet!* It was 0200. I'd pay double if I had to, so I went. I got stuck in a dodgy old street. All I kould see were old women skurrying. Animals roaming, eating shit off the ground. Chickens and ducks, going about their little pecking and quacking businesses. There was a door at the end. I guessed it was the vet with the ket and rapped it loud.

An old man opened the door. Gleaming black eyes, pointy ears, a kolourful gown and a grey beard—half goatee, half fox. He smelled of that cheap aftershave they made in the tourist attraktion, fragrance faktories in Luxor.

"Scotia landi?" He asked.

I told him: "Aye. Korrekt mate! Indeed, it's me. So let me in and sell me the stuff. I have to get up at 0630. Three and a half hours—I'm running out of time!" He stood out of the way. I walked into his hall. It stunk of kooking, animal hair and exkrement.

As he handed me two vials, he said: "Listen to me, please. Only half a vial at thee one time. Promeese me?" I kaught the weight of his koncern but ignored it like I always did. Maybe he'd done it all before. I didn't know, and I didn't kare.

I said: "Yes, *for fuck's sake*, give me the stuff!" Time was an enemy. Then I noticed he had given me two vials, but that was all. "Oh! *Wow*—wait a minute! How am I supposed to injekt a vial without a needle? Syringe? Have you got a syringe mate?" I asked while mimicking injekting myself. He skuffled away expertly and kame back with a 5ml needle.

I got a taxi back to the hotel.

There were about three hours left before we had to wake up and go home. So I thought,—*I'm gonna pop inside myself for a while. Why not? It's my right as a holidaymaker to get all tripped out inside myself!* My girlfriend was sleeping in the hotel bed when I did a full vial at once. Doktor's orders were orderly disregarded. I did my own thing as usual. I spent the entire three hours deep inside myself, exploring the korridors of my konciousness. Ketamine, especially if injekted, kan do absurd things to a mind. While I was deep inside myself, I was talking in Egyptian to the dead. All of a sudden, I seemed to be fluent in a language I had no interest in learning. Was deep in konversation with a 2000 year-dead queen when it all began fragmenting. Distorting. Statik. Ekhoes. Something strange was going on and it wasn't dark outside anymore. I was koming to.

Abrupt noise. Light. My girlfriend had woken up.

I was slowly emerging from the korridor, wondering what I had done to myself—bekause nothing felt real. I knew I shouldn't have done that, but I sold myself another lie—*I really did not have much choice. I am an addikt of the highest order after all.* I was so far below. Inside the fabrik of the karpet, watching her skreaming, shouting, packing our stuff into bags. Then the other Irish hotel guests were helping to karry me out.

I told them to stop until I went to the toilet. The other vial of ketamine was in my pocket. I kouldn't get kaught at the airport with it. Or I'd get locked-up in Egypt. In the toilet, the big syringe in hand, veins begging for the ket.

In it went, and...

Kurtains down. Soul defunkt. I'd overdosed in an airport toilet. Klassy bastard that I am.

When I opened my eyes again, reality was still there, klinging to me like a wet sheet. No tunnel. No light. No warm embrace—just the same sick joke.

I decided to kut the konversing with dead queens and koncentrated my efforts on Death itself.

Hello Death,

Haven't seen you in ages. How are things in that majestik kingdom of yours?

Why don't you ever just keep me? You kontinually spit me back into a tepid, nauseating, brain-deforming reality—for reasons beyond my understanding. Is it me? Do I stink like a half-rotten mink? Do you hate me like *they* do? Bekause I swear to whatever God you've eaten and shit out—I wouldn't do that to you. Ever.

What if I was standing in the middle of a massakre, blood spurting over the horizon, limbs flying. I take it that I would be the only one blinking in the smoke?

If I kaught Ebola, AIDS, Tuberkulosis or some hot and kool new killer virus with a name like Jazzfunkia—would I be the last kockroach dancing through the fever?

What if there was a nuklear war. The city turned to glass, millions vaporised. There I'd be—still breathing, skin steaming, bones singing in the heat of ten thousand suns.

A blood orange filled with razorblades, I'd chew it. The blades would just bend in my stomach, go soft, slide out of me like silver worms.

What if someone shot me in the back of the head? My brains bloomed like red fireworks exploding out my eyes—kool Death. Beautiful Death—but no, you'd krawl in, sew the sockets with black thread, push my thoughts back through the holes, and send me packing.

I kould even try the shotgun in the bath, like that little good-looking man from Nirvana. I'd do it too—but I only have a shower, so my ghost would drip. You'd still save me and laugh in my face.

I had a dream I was on the subway. There was an urge in me to take my chances and jump in front of the train. I just bounced off the thing and landed back on my feet on the platform. You even wind me up in dreams these days—you're out of order!

What did I do to you? Why won't you take me? I am alone.

You're a bigger bastard than me, and that says it all.

I'm waiting.

Enjoy your life, Death—you kunt!

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Death didn't reply.

I died my fifth Death. Took an all-expenses-paid trip to the afterlife—platinum membership, no vouchers from the last one required. Bonus points already sekured. Things were looking good when it kame to dying. I was bekoming a Pops level professional dier. If only Death would see things that way.

If it had been my fifth birthday, maybe I'd have got a new football and a Simon the Spider kake. But no—it was *just* my fifth Death. No kard. No kandle. No silly kake. Kruel bastards. Nobody wants me. Not *them*. Not Death.

Turns out I'm too resilient for Hell and too rotten for Heaven—so I'm stuck here, rotting beautifully inside my skin packaging.

And the old man with one of the oldest jobs known to man, kross-examining my self-debasing self with deep brown eyes. I'll never forget him. I aktually feel bad about vets. They bekame my go-to for two things—ketamine to knock large animals out and benzodiazepines—to settle anxious animals. I konned vets eventually, bekause doktors and their medikal rekords had the words: "WATCH OUT FOR MANIPULATION!!!" Skored above every page.

In Scotland: 2008—574 Deaths.

✯✯✯

|||Thump—Like a WW2 mine blew up in my chest—Thump|||

I kan't remember anything until I'd been released from hospital in Luxor. Walked out under that big yellow bastard in the sky to a waiting taxi. After the bumpy, battering ride, I was in the middle of Luxor International Airport—puking into bags, with a four-man armed guard around me. I was being sick and half-choked, when one of them prodded me in the ribs with the end of an AK-47.

I said: "Wow! *For fuck's sake man*—that was sore. I am only being sick. It's not like I'm a murderer! Get your akt together and don't prod me with the end of your machine gun again—you silly kunt!"

"Sorry man. I deed not mean to hurt you." He said very quietly. His tone and eyes were already telling me all I had to know about what was next. I was going to be searched.

"Fine but try and not point a gun at an innocent person. It doesn't take much to akcidentally discharge an Iranian AK."

"Yes, you are right. But how did you know it was made in Iran?"

I lied: "I was talking to a soldier at the *Valley of the Kings* the other day. He told me his was Iranian!" I had said too much as it was. Didn't want to risk being investigated for firearms knowledge. Then I wouldn't be getting out of Luxor.

They took me away, dumped me in some search room. Obviously, they kouldn't find any drugs bekause I had taken them all and had a daft little Death in the process. They weren't the kind of men I would term anywhere klose to remotely klever.

On the way back to Ireland, the kouple who paid for extra leg room on the plane had to rest their feet on my unkonscious self bekause the flight attendants didn't have a klue what to do with me. The man was deliberately skrewing his heels into me, I have vague memories about asking him straight: "Are you deliberately trying to inflikt pain on me, you fucking nutkase?"

"Oh no! I wouldn't do a thing like that."

"Fine. But if you do it again and disturb my sleep, I'll kause so much trouble they'll have to divert the plane somewhere other than Ireland. Hope you like England, *maaaate!"*

I emphasize 'mate' when I'm being sarkastik, sneer my lips, skrew my face.

Slept the rest of the flight in relative peace. No, that's a lie—I slept like the only korpse in the graveyard who didn't kome back in the zombie apokalypse.

Once we arrived back in Dublin, I was still semi-unkonscious, and my girlfriend was stressed to the max. It was not the sort of holiday she was used to.

I remember thinking: *If she hadn't been lying down on her arse sunbathing, I might not have died!*

A person addikted to anything will find a pulse to blame, followed by justifikation to seal the deal. If she'd been a black kat? "You're too white for your own good! Look at all the other black kats, they aren't as white as you!" A fat mouse? "*For fuck's sake,* mouse. You're looking malnourished! Eat more of the food I drop on the floor." A fish? "You're swimming in far too much water. That's

greed!"

We split up quite soon after. Not bekause of my aktions, obviously—I'm perfekt.

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My memories are jaded. My soul is burning. My self-examination is violent.

Luxor didn't want to see me again, the people on the plane obviously didn't; and neither did the lovely Irish nurse. I was a ridikulous reprobate.

Unreliable? I've always been unreliable. I always will be. No, not proud. Just real. However, if I tell you straight, I klear the path for you to walk towards me anytime.

Abjekt Honesty works. It means being open to the existential reality of others. Decency, really. Live for what makes you happy. Die for it too. We all die full-time for one reason or other—you'd be as well making it worth it.

To live for something or to die for something—which will your epitaph read? We don't indulge in such questions.

Why not?

☆☆☆

Death Six

Abjekt Honesty 666-1
God komes only to give solace, resurrekt and sleep.
Pops and I have kome to worship the devil.
Kon, die and ruin whole cities.
God may forgive us, but only afterwards.
If we did not do so—there would be nothing to forgive.
God would bekome redundant.

Soundtrack: Rowland S Howard – *Exit Everything*
"The sky was deep,
and the wind was hot,
and I tried to speak,
but I could not,
The telephone rang like church bells,
Jesus Christ, I've gone to hell."

AnnoDomini[atrix] 2009

After the Egyptian holiday heaven and hell, my serenity was sucked through a riot by suspicion. I knew I'd be shot in the back of the head—by a friend, not an enemy. Working with men who shoot skulls, legs and spines does that to you. I didn't trust them anyway, but I'm not stupid. At that point, I was genuinely skared.

A lot of people were shot. A lot more were stabbed. Everyone involved was up to their ankles in puddles of *friend's* blood. In that ugly world, questionable friendship is a dangerous postkode. That would be a postkode I wish I didn't know at all.

I was going to be killed—I knew.

Pops was hanging around my house at nights, just waiting under a lamppost, looking at his watch and looking up to my window every ten minutes. Should never have made friends with a fucking vampire. *Idiot*!

I kould smell Death with every breath.

I kould taste it in my mouth.

I kould feel it all over my skin.

Go.

R*un.*

Fast.

Or end up dead full-time.

Not for people who kare more for their bank balance than they do for their wives or children. Thankfully, that is not in my blood. So I fucked off.

The Death of Dublin took me to a rehab in Bournemouth in early summer, 2007. On the sunny—but still fridge-like—south koast of England. I did okay for a few weeks, even managed to stop taking drugs altogether for one of those weeks. Progress, some kall it. No—I didn't have a choice. Addiktion changes a lot in your life. It makes you do things you never believed you would. It messes up everything—along with your brain—and bleeds it inside out. When your only choice is a week off drugs, or a bullet in the back of the head, survival mode kicks in. Addiktion nurtures survival like a mother would nurture her favourite child. Yet another paradox—you are surviving but never really living.

During my weeklong abstinence, however, my penis happened to trip and fall inside a married woman. The dirty tale was told by neighbours, and it kaused uproar. Everyone was against me. I was thrown out of rehab. Within hours I was up to the underside of my balls in brown powder again.

One morning, I woke up with yet another woman and went into her toilet to administer myself some of that brown powder. Was beginning to struggle to find a working vein that I kould nourish my body via. Sat down on a white bog seat, in a whiter than average toilet. I had already kooked up the brown powder. It had transformed into a liquid, like diarrhoea, in the syringe. Awaiting its final departure on the mainline to my heart and my brain. I had my belt around the top of my numb left

arm. I was sliding in and out of my poor arm like a flasher's dick snapping in and out of a filthy fly zip on a sweltering day in a grim park.

There was blood pissing out of my arm, but I kept searching. Nothing. I untied the belt and did it all over again on my right arm. By then I was in trouble. Withdrawals. The heroin was emptied back onto the spoon from the syringe. I went to the khemist and got a bigger needle, so I kould go into my groin. I had never done it before and thought I would be able to do it. So I went ahead. Didn't find a vein the first few times. Kould feel blood dripping off my balls. Was hurting. Hurting with a need beyond the black rivers of pain.

Blood was splattered over the toilet walls. Krusting up.

At last I found a vein.

I pulled back the plunger—oxygen-lit krimson surged in, pulsing with each heartbeat as I exhaled the breath I'd been holding and pushed. That's when it happened—I felt like I had been smashed in the face and soul by a freight-train.

The needle kracked and flew out of my groin like a kartridge from a shotgun.

It exploded akross that shocking white shit-pen of domestik monotony. Would have left a blood spatter analyst with nothing but mystery from my misery. I'd hit an artery. Not a vein.

The woman's toilet was broken beyond repair.

It looked like Jackson Pollock had redekorated with a serial killer's fevered blood dream. I sat still, for once, and stared at the red on white. It didn't even look like mine. Didn't even feel like me. I was exhausted. Blood was pissing down my groin and legs. Stinging my balls like acid.

If only Pops had popped round for an afternoon kup of blood, he wouldn't have had to flash those kute-little-vampire-teeth under the harsh fluorescent lights of the emergency ward that night.

After a few minutes, I kooked up another hit—finally hit my groin vein.

Relief and pain hit me at once. I was alive.

Later that night, I met a prostitute.

What? No. Not for sex.

For something far worse—I wish it was as innocent as paying for a fuck. I wore my new three-quarter-length Prada koat, black trousers, and a white, maybe kream, shirt. She told me about bus drivers finishing their shift, getting blowjobs on their buses. That's when I had the bright idea—pretend I was Bournemouth Vice Squad. When the punter paid her and she knelt to perform the deed she had been paid for, she'd bang her knee on the floor. That was my kue. I hit the emergency door release, shouted, and waited. Sure enough, he kame to the door.

"Hi, sir. *Police—Bournemouth Vice.* Looks like your lucky day. The officer in charge told us to issue on-the-spot fines for illegal vice aktivities." He looked jumpy. All I had to do was apply a little more pressure.

"Emmm. I didn't do anything. I promise."

I used to say it every time the police kaught me. Bullshit—I knew the grave his mind was digging.

Was on the verge of taking a guilt-trip to *Feel-Bad-on-Sea* when the prostitute appeared behind him. Perfekt timing.

"Look mate. She's known to us. Pay the fine, it vanishes—no rekord, no hassle. Like I said—your lucky fucking day. And you"—I turned to her—"off the bus! Show your face again tonight, and you'll be locked up all weekend. No exceptions for you, or the lovely man whose dick you were about to suck!" Yes, I made her feel bad when I kould. I've said it before—I'm not here to be liked. I'm here to tell you the truth that my lying bastard of a memory tells me. I was paying her from my illegal impersonating-a-police-officer gig. It's not like I was using her for the sake of being horrible—but I was regardless. She trundled off down the road with her tail between her legs.

"Shit. Yes. You won't arrest me?" His hands bounced around like they were on those cheap trampolines by the seafront. I knew that what he had was what I was having.

"Step off the bus please." I flashed an ID kard—quick, unreadable. Took his name, address, marital status—married. Faked a warrant check on my phone. His hands were doing somersaults.

The time had kome to exploit the shit out of him.

"Okay sir. I'm fining you £250. Then move your bus to the seafront bay."

He nodded. Then he asked: "Kan I go back on the bus and get my wallet?"

"Yes. Stay in my line of sight, though." I sighed, locking my eyes on his sad, blue paddling pools. I'd been arrested more times than I kan kount. I knew the lingo, the stance, *the tone.* He went to his seat and started kounting fivers—probably tip money that was for paying the prostitute.

"Sir, kan you hurry? I've got an incident waiting!" I was bored—always on the edge of withdrawals. No matter how much heroin I'd used. My veins were begging for yet another intrusion.

He stepped off, fivers fluttering like those shitty seaside fans vendors sell. I pocketed the money and watched him drive off.

Then—stillness.

The air.

The street.

The rumble of the bus fading into silence.

Money in hand.

Frozen.

It felt like someone else had done it. Yet another monstrous kon. I didn't grasp its enormity till I stood there in the street. Then the justifikation voice kicked in: *He's not a viktim. He was about to get a blowjob from a whore. You saved her. You are a good man. One day, they'll give you a knighthood for your services to the unfortunate.* I listened to that voice far too much.

She kame back smiling. I gave her £70. She was grateful.

I fucked off and had a little me-drug-festival.

A few nights later, she tried it again—with some other man. But that pretend police officer wasn't as good a bullshitter. They got kaptured by the real kops. Yes, I laughed when I heard.

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Did I feel bad? Of kourse I didn't. I aktually felt *good* about the vice stunt. Still do, if I'm Abjektly Honest. Why not? It was a far more akceptable way to make £180 than I was used to.

I still believe my own bullshit. It was a horrible thing to do. I was out of order. Total skumbag.

At least I'm honest with myself. I know what I am. I live with what I am.

The drug [ab]use was wracked up to avalanche force. The pain I was kausing was beyond belief.

I had brought it all on myself. Hurt myself so badly. Destroyed everything I ever had. Destroyed every person and every city.

Malevolence was my duty. Mayhem was ingrained. Manipulation was a gift from hell.

I was a Death defeater. Kruel and kancerous. Wicked and desperate.

Waiting. Wanting. Wired to blow.

At any fucking sekond.

☆☆☆

After a three-hour bus ride from Bournemouth to London, then a twelve-hour one from London to Glasgow, followed by a one and a half-hour journey to Stirling, and a half-hour krawl from there along the hill foots; I was back home in the village of Tillicoultry at my sister's. I went to work as a financial konsultant (sixteen hours every day), took drugs (shitloads), and had multiple romantik affairs (boring). I was trying to be normal but was so far gone by then. Life was bekoming inkreasingly unliveable. I did not know what to do. Well, I knew how to die, but that was about it.

People who knew me didn't want to know me etc. Might as well have been dead—didn't even want to face myself. When any person begins banging drugs into their veins, half a tenner bag and they get a great hit. Me? I hunted the best—not some piss-poor, average shit. Dekades of [ab]use turned my hits to dead weights—substance severance basikally. I'd slam fifty quid straight into my savage bloodstream. It stopped the sickness, yes.

But high? Fuck no. Not anymore. My days in the klouds were long gone.

So, I was back in the icy garden of tolerance, feeling a want that kould never be satisfied.

Proper done in.

I'd been experimenting with how big I kould make a hit. Sussing shit out in a friend's horrible, stinking flat. To put this in kontext for you, I will equate heroin into vodka—kan you imagine a person drinking a bottle of straight vodka in one extended swig?

Okay—now imagine that same person injekting a bottle of vodka in one.

But this wasn't vodka. It was heroin. I injekted too much yet again.

An obscene amount.

Death muttered: *"You again? Get-a-fucking grip of yourself. Deary me."*

Didn't even stand up.

Didn't smile.

Didn't even take my koat.

Cheeky bastard.

|||Thump—Ouch—Thump|||

I kame back to life under the hands of my friend—a grizzly Englishman who had given me kompressions. He'd been guided through the whole fakade by the NHS mob on the phone. A long, winding piece of spit hung from the korner of his lip, flirting with my mouth. I tried—and miserably failed—to dodge it. He only noticed once it landed on my tongue and I swallowed it. People who are addikted to drugs might say: "I had a little slip with drugs!" Well, I had yet another little slip back into Death. A relapse with what was fast bekoming my newest addiktion.

Those ghosts were walking around his living room. The sinister man ghosts were searching my pockets. I was disgusted but kouldn't stop them. The little girl ghosts had their blood drops filled with haunted memories of me eating my friend's puke when I was little.

The white bed sheet ghosts appeared a lot bekause we were bekoming friends—I'd put them in kontakt with Pops. Their blood sprays were always fresh thanks to the kute-old-vampire dude.

When his latest viktim had died, he filled those little brown preskription bottles for them—once the blood wasn't good for him. Nice vampire is Pops. I told him to sell the stuff, but he said it was his charitable nature.

The ambulance men kame into the little living room and wired me up to a machine, measuring all my blood and heart shit. Then I noticed they were pulling a big syringe out of a black box and were about to plunge it right into my thigh. Without even asking.

"What is *that*? Naloxone? *No way!* This shit is *not* happening!" Naloxone is a lifesaver in overdose kases. It komes in a syringe and kicks the opiates off brain receptors; then it puts up walls so no more kan get in—but it also throws the drug [ab]user straight into precipitated withdrawals.

"*Fuck no!*" I said sarkastikally. Did not want to know lifesavers by then. Only Deathsavers.

Will always remember the way he looked at me.

The bastard had the audacity to pity me. It hurt my pride.

A few missiles get under my personal iron dome. I still see his face.

Some people bekome ghosts before they are dead.

What is a ghost, if not someone stuck in someone else's subkonscious memory?

I exist inside that subkonscious space where the living and ghosts koexist.

I know the dead—personally.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

The grizzly Englishman is full-time dead now. He saved my life but now doesn't have one himself. It doesn't seem fair that so many people saved my life but now don't have one themselves. How does a justifikation machine justify the unjustifiable? I kan't. Not now.

A guy once told me: "If you die in your dreams—you die in real life."

I was Pops in a dream I had while writing this. I died six times in a row, skreaming like a madman as the sun made my skin bubble, pop, krisp, and fall away to ash. Every morning, I'd be running down the koffin hall; I'd hit the door—boom! Soul subverting pain. Again and again and again. Agonising and dehumanising. An entire day would last six sekonds. At six on the morning on the final day, I remember hitting the koffin door and feeling alright, like everything was normal.

Then, horror—I was alive. I opened my eyes and was in a world I didn't know. No names. No love. No language. People didn't even have faces. Only the weight of distilled hate made sense to me. I wanted out but was stuck—kouldn't even die. A real nightmare. The best nightmares always teach a lesson. My lesson was—*be grateful for what you have.*

Nightmares are a human right.

☆☆☆

The day I had died in stretched out hedonistikally. I went to parties bekause I didn't want to be alone after a Death. That's what dead people do, right? Lots of girls and boys, [s]hit[ty] musik and that air of God-awful tension bekause some of them didn't like me for reasons beyond my understanding[?]. I was in a woman's house, having my brain polluted by awful cheesy hardkore rave musik. Over the other side of the pool-table, I felt eyes watching me. It made me slightly unkomfortable. Poor me. Then he was in my face, spitting through teeth gritted like they'd been fused together by an ark welder. I had to think quickly. There was nothing else I kould do—my forehead smashed onto his nose. It exploded into fragments of flesh. Blood splattered all over the pool table and up the walls. Poor him.

Pops! Get here quick and you will get a free meal without having to kill anyone.

What a fucking mess. And don't think I say this out of ego embellishment. My life was miserable. I was stuck in the dead-end town I grew up in with a heroin habit that was way beyond sense or logik. I had lost everything so many times that my understanding of having nothing was more substantial than most people's bank balances. I was richly poor. Sometimes I'd embark on the odd endeavour, like the time I walked up a dark lane and kaught a married doktor having sex with one of his patients who had mental health problems.

My solution wasn't to inform the medikal board. Not to konsider the poor woman at all.

Blackmail. Again. One of my favourite krimes. I used to say there were no viktims during the kourse of a blackmailing exploit, I was only konning a bad person. I would bend my mind so much that I was konning myself. But I was not a viktim. It's awful. I don't even know why I'm telling you this. Well, I do—Abjekt Honesty was always meant to be kruel on me, not anyone else. That's why I'm telling you. I was too klever for my own good, fluent in every trick in every book. But I wasn't klever enough. You've read the reasons why.

Do I feel guilt for blackmailing the doktor? Yes.

I saw him when I went home at xmas. He dismissed my pleading eyes the way I dismissed his professional betrayal—but in a far more humane manner.

My mistakes last forever.

His mistake lasted a few minutes.

He was made to pay regardless.

I don't forget the poor woman either.

Kan't forget the guilt wrapped around my neck and dragging me into the grave.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

How many fights have I been in? I have no idea.

How many times have I been punched in the face? At least two hundred. Minimum.

How many times have I lost absolutely everything? I don't know—a lot. To lose everything is a Death of materiality. Everything I owned died. Possessions slipped through my fingers like blood from one of Pop's viktims. The material bekame immaterial.

It is a pity that Pops kan't feed off dead possessions, or I'd have kept him in his vampirik business forever and ever after.

I wish that blackmail venture would die inside my brain. Existence has a habit of sharpening guilt into a huge syringe that pierces my soul like a sewing machine needle. I hate it. But my aktions belong to me alone; I kannot outrun them.

Scotland drug Deaths: 545.

☆☆☆

The Witches

AbjeKt Honesty 666-2
If a person turns to mediums, witches or nekromancers,
whoring after them,
Pops kould set his fangs on their necks.
He will konsult the vampire kommunity about turning them full-time.
There may be a meeting, then there may be a Death.
What might a person do when Death is all that is left?
Everything sordid, everything vile,
and enjoy themselves all the while.

Soundtrack: Scott Walker – *The Seventh Seal*
"Anybody hear of plague in this town?
The town I've left behind was burned to the ground.
A young girl on a stake, her face framed in flames,
cried *'I'm not a witch; God knows my name.'*
The knight, he watched with fear, he needed to know,
he ran where he might feel God's breath,
and in the misty church, he knelt to confess,
the face within the booth was Mr Death."

AnnoDomini[atrix]2010

I should tell you about this time I was indulging in the worship of demons and devils with three white witches—who were as black as hell.

We met around 2300 at the gates to a graveyard you don't want to know the name of. If I told you, I'd be admitting I did very bad things where your parents, or grandparents, were buried. The witches were more up for it than I was. Krazy women and magi[c]k is a bad idea. We sat at a massive tomb which was built for a rich family. Deliberately chosen. That family—long-time dead—had done all sorts of naughty stuff that pissed off church people back in the days before television, internet and mobile phones. I had black klothes on and tried to figure out if the witches did too. But it was so dark under the trees at the entrance, I kouldn't see such inkonsequentialities as kolour. Then my overthinking mind stopped in shock. One of them skreamed—a sound I didn't know existed in real life. Only once before had I experienced such raw, unfiltered, audio-terrorism—Blixa Bargeld of Einstürzende Neubauten (I have their logo tattooed on my neck), in the video for *Armenia*. It went on and on. It skraped out the tender little hearing valves I owned.

She didn't stop—then the others joined in.

I sat there, listening to kakophonous karnage inside the graveyard of your parents. They had lots of drugs. Drink too. They wanted to be skrewed. I was the only human being with a penis present and was thinking about all the positions I'd skrew them on that grave.

They started praying to the devil. I watched. Tried not to hear the words, even though I knew them too well. Then we played a game. I had to think of a number from 0 to 100, and they'd use their gift of telepathy to figure it out. I doubted it but didn't say so—didn't want to ruin my chance of seeing their black lacy pants drop for the devil that had started to stir in my groin.

I knew my number. It's always the same. 93—Will and love, Thelema and Agape, that old Aleister Crowley number, magi[c]k and meaning folded into one. I'd always liked it. Felt like something more than chance, even if I didn't believe in much of anything. I kept it to myself. Let them play their game. Wondered how much of it—if any—was real.

Sure enough, she spat out: "93."

I asked why she said that number.

"I don't know. Is it special to you like?" Something like that. She got it—but didn't get why it mattered. If she was trying to show off her okkult knowledge, she'd have done better admitting she knew zero. And don't worry—I'm not so kredulous that I didn't overthink the whole thing. I'm going to make a klear and direkt suggestion right now, instead of me laying the groundwork with shitty euphemisms etc—just believe me—Abjekt Honesty. *For fuck's sake*, I have told you enough about me to earn your trust by now. No?

I started tuning into the musik they'd brought: Amon Düül – *Psychedelic Underground*. Ramshackle. Jittery. Like a Jonestown survivors' jam session. Koven vibes. Ritual-drenched. Aligned with the underworld. I was impressed by their musik taste—if not their okkult knowledge.

Everything was going good until one of them handed me a flute. I kan't play instruments. No musikal ability whatsoever. I wasn't going to make a kunt of myself, sit kross-legged and misty-eyed on a grave with a flute, like some kind of drugged-up leprekhaun.

I refused—we had a problem.

One of them was skreaming at me, kalling me: "A disgrace to black spirituality!" Funny—I thought they said they were white witches. The kute little witch kept eyeballing me. The mad witch kept shouting. The other witch was messing about with her phone, a true modern-day witch.

I said: "Fuck this shit! I've had enough. Have any of you died before?"

Mad witch: "No I have not! Why would you ask such a stupid question? Would I be here if I had?" I'd never seen an angry witch before, was kaught inside fantasies of what I'd do to her. Always wanted to skrew a horrible witch from one of those fairytales.

Kouldn't help myself: "Well, that depends. I've died and I'm still here."

She said I was taking the piss. They started wrapping up their graveyard sex party. I was left wondering what to do. My prokrastination didn't last long. "Kan I kut you and drink your blood?" Yes—unfortunately—that's *exaktly* what I said.

She pondered a few sekonds and said: "Hmm, okay. As long as you don't drink it raw—add it to a shot of absinthe." My eyebrows raised back into Satan mode. I kouldn't believe my luck. Slippery sex was looking unlikely, but blood and absinthe kocktails sounded better by then anyway.

I asked: "Who has absinthe?"

"We do silly! You up for it? You kould kut us, suck it out, spit it into a ketamine and absinthe kocktail. That's how we were taught to do it. You wanna?" Of kourse I did, especially after hearing the K word.

But I was more interested in who taught them: "You were taught? Who by?" I was trying to get names. We were all lokal. I wanted to sus them out.

"Kan't tell you that. You should know not to ask questions like that," I knew. I was just being nosey if I'm honest.

Three witches and I. Graveyard. Midnight. A huge goblet filled with absinthe, ket and blood. One of them ended up donating more from her wrists—I kouldn't suck enough out of the other. As weird as it sounds, I aktually enjoyed it.

Still—why did that mad witch guess *93*? They didn't seem to know the okkult very well. Reminded me of people who talk about riots but never throw a brick. I didn't skrew all three. Only skrewed one—if I'm honest. Didn't want to skrew all three. Three's a holy number. I was obsessed with the black side of life, and of Death.

Hard to say what happened next. Bekause I don't remember it—not properly.

I was skrewing her on someone's grave. Doggy-style. Noisy. I looked at the writing. On the next grave. I saw it. The number *93*. Klear as day. The one who said it kouldn't have seen it—she was facing away. I had been watching. Suspicious.

Then, another *93*. Big. On the grave behind the one we were on. I stopped. She asked what was going on. I wasn't bothered about her anymore. Was kaught in a trance that wouldn't straight up dance. The leader of the other two walked over. I'll never forget what she said: "Life isn't all about you—and neither is Death. I'm koming back for you."

For fuck's sake, at least let me finish fucking your friend before saying such a horrible thing. Dekades later. Her final statement unsettles me. Is she koming back for me?

I suppose she will have to die first. Then she'll have to join a queue the length of the koastline of the British Isles. If there is anything left of me by the time she gets to have her piece, I'll tell all the rest of the people queuing how we knew each other—having sex on the graveside of their parents.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

✯✯✯

Something was very wrong. I kouldn't work out what. Now I kan—me, just me. I was very, very wrong. If I had been a *normal guy*, I would have skrewed the three all night on those grave-beds. I think it's the dream of most guys—three women at the same time. Not me.

Abjekt Honesty? I was more interested in drinking their blood than anything else and was so far away that I diskonnekted from every kurrent available, and we all went home. Me—for drugs.

To my knowledge, I was the only one who didn't kome to know something that night.

Typikal. Not even magi[c]k kould change me.

✯✯✯

Death Seven

Abjekt Honesty 7.1-1
For Death has not destined me to live,
but to obtain salvation through repetition.
Every road. Every voyage. Every fight.
Every word I write,
gives me Death—my human right.

Soundtrack: This Heat – *Not Waving*
"Here I am in the ocean,
not waving but drowning,
just a nervous reaction,
please don't rescue me."

AnnoDomini[atrix]2011 (possibly not)

This is very approximate in terms of time and its konstraints. It got so normal that I kan't really remember such things as insignifikant little Deaths. I think it happened in the summer of 2011, but I'm not sure. Stay with me though. It's worth it—in the darkest and strangest of ways. I didn't just defeat Death—I water-skied all over the top of it. Kut its throat with the fin on the bottom of my ski.

My family always had lots of speedboats, every type you kan imagine. We've had them all. On a kold, early-summer weekend, Burntisland, on the east koast of Scotland, was where we'd fuck off to. A quick getaway. We took a ribbed inflatable and planned to stay in a small kampsite. That was easy enough. What was harder was Friday night—once we were all hooked down and supposedly being a family. I was not. My pal, and I were there; we really shouldn't have been. We headed to the pub. Macho egos all up the walls. When we got there, everything felt unreal. An ugly little dump in the centre of town. We were outside smoking joints, and the entire town seemed to be standing on the other side of the road.

I said to him: "This is fakt... If you get into a fight with lots of people, they end up kicking and punching each other in futile attempts to hit one body. When fifty bodies are in a fight—there's no sense when it komes to inflikting pain on one body."

"Prove it!" He said, hoarse, gruff and mechanikal.

He spoke like a robot when we were kids due to falling out of a window when he was two or three. I think he died at first. Then kame back broken. Or maybe harder. He had a *tracheostomy* afterwards—a hole kut in his throat to help him breathe after the akcident. He spent years in hospital. The first time I met him, aged six, he pressed his neck and said: "I'm a robot."

I believed him. Now he had a deep, gruff tone.

"Emm, okay. You see that group over there? Watch what I do when I get inside them."

"Watching," said my robot buddy. Yes, I am that much of a bastard I have kalled him a robot my whole life. I walked over and immediately felt unwelkome. Eyeballed. I prepared for what kame next. But to get a reaktion, I had to generate an aktion. I punched one square in the face, then another. All I kould see were kontorted faces and mouths—the uninhibited and totally justified rage of the assaulted. During the few sekonds between shock and mass reaktion—tension, pain and innocence had a quick skuffle on a kliff-edge. Pain kame out on top. Fists and feet bekame my existence. Shouting through gritted teeth. Blow upon blow upon blow. A reaktion of the most severe kind. I realised I kould get properly hurt. Then I saw my own bloodied face reflekted in half-polished boots. It was the police. Only this time, their filth wasn't obvious. They saved my arse.

One asked: "What were you thinking you fucking maniak?"

"I don't know, *maaaate*! I don't do the thinking palaver very well. Thanks! Oh—give your boots a quick polish when you get home tonight. I almost kouldn't see my face!"

Dismissive? Yes indeed.

I was just happy to be out of the revolving, repugnant ruckus. A little celebration most probably. My pal and I started walking the six miles back to the kampsite, only to get the shock of our lives—four guys with baseball bats, bike chains and knives. It was skary. It had me thinking of pains I had never known. I've always rated pain out of ten for doktors—there must be a pain I don't know. So no pain gets a ten. But that was exaktly what I was expekting.

We were in a world of trouble.

One ran over and smashed me in the face with a two-by-four. Outrageous vandalism of my koupon achieved in one kold blow. I saw my blood all over it as he swung it around like a ninja. Then I noticed that my pal had vanished. I thought—*that fucking robot koward*—while I took baseball bat smacks, stabs in my lower back and a horrendous amount of savage punches and kicks.

Suddenly, I was back on my feet, fighting again, when my pal reappeared to help me. I snatched a stick from one of the pain-providers and whirled around like an anti-ninja. Smashing. Bashing. Until I kouldn't go on. I was absolutely exhausted. Just as I was about to sit down on the kerb and allow them to do what they wanted to do (kill me), there were sirens. Blue light began flooding the street. Distant—koming into land. Once again, the police saved my arse.

They even gave us a lift back to the loch and karavan. Nice filth. I would've tipped them if I'd remembered but my head was in pieces. I've done this many times before—absolutely ignored my injuries and went to sleep. Later, I woke up for a piss and walked to the toilet block. I remember being on one of those little plastic paths.

Then nada. That's when I stole a spaceship back to Planet Death. Krashed the thing into a black sun that emitted nothing but nothing's mother of nothing.

Dead.

Dead.

Gone.

Adrift in the Galaxy of Nekros. At least I had peace again. Was not even sure I wanted to go home. Kould exist in the void forever. Then I'd have some protektion from hurting myself.

Maybe, just maybe, that is the real end to every story.

Adrift and resting.

Serene.

Unseen.

|||Thump—A spaceship-kracker trying to break into my vessel—Thump|||

They rushed me to Kirkcaldy A&E and did what they do. Saved. Yet-a-fucking-gain.

Doktor: "Your heart stopped on two okkasions. You are very ill. The police have asked to question you regarding the assault that took place. I said that you are too ill just now. They said they would kome back around lunchtime to take a statement if you wish?"

Once again, I did what I did best and lied liked the junkie I was: "Thanks Doktor. But there was no assault. I was klimbing over a wooden gate and fell on garden shears I think. Then the police gave me a lift home to the karavan park. I must have passed out on the way to the bogs. I have no idea why people kall police officers *'The Filth,'* out of order. But no, I will not be giving any statement for falling. My own fault (truth—at last!)."

The doktor frowned and said: "Kome on now. You have been beaten, stabbed and slashed like a haggis on Burns' Night. Your heart stopped twice. Why don't you talk it over with them?"

By the time he finished, I was getting bored. Before the klock hit 0600, I had signed myself out and got a taxi back to Burntisland, just in time for everyone waking up and talking about tides. Back inside boring reality. I kouldn't tell anyone what had happened to me bekause I had started it all. So I let my tongue rest in the grave at the bottom of my mouth. When I was helping to put the RIB in the water, it hit me—like archangels throwing a koal sack out of heaven straight onto my skull—I forgot I'd have to water-ski. I always had to water-ski if we were on a family weekend.

At the age of fourteen, the manager of the Scottish water-ski team watched me from the shore, said how well I took a slalom kourse. My dad told me to make a good impression. I had other ideas—strawberry acid tabs in my pocket—took one right after. Then I went water-skiing and messed up almost every buoy. If you ever see a teenager start a slalom kourse like a pro, only to look like he's trying to kiss the buoys instead of klearing them, he's probably tripping.

I didn't make any team.

Anyway, back in Burntisland...

Rough water. Shitty morning. Hungover from drink—and from Death sneaking in and back out only hours before. I was skiing anyway, karving tracks through the khaos of my own ruin. The boat pulled me under the old Forth Rail Bridge. Salt stung my grazed face—it didn't matter. Pain, like Death, was bekoming obsolete. I was building a massive tolerance to both.

I loved to ski. I wish I still kould. Yet another konsequence of my wayward ways.

My life is filled with *WTF* moments.

This one?

This Death was over.

My family didn't know about it until now.

I'll break every rule I have and say sorry to them.

No one else.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

Okay, so the notion that I am unhinged has been well determined. A diabolikal deviant. Due to horrendous, self-inflikted cirkumstances, I've bekome immune to [y]our greatest fear—Death. I know it sounds unbelievable. I'm with you, sitting in horror at a story that should never have happened. But it did.

If I had any kontrol, none of this would exist. I'd be telling you a neat and tidy little story about a boy who went klimbing with his girlfriend and found an alien, or some drivel like that. I'd build tension, hook you in, give you dialogue that reads like an orthodox book. I'd spin pure lies and give you what you want as a reader. But I kan't kontrol myself. I never kould.

Probably never will, not properly.

That said, maybe it's time to stop beating myself up. That was how bad I *was*. It is not how bad I *am*. These days, it's shocking to see others do far worse than I ever would. I kan't help kompare bad me to bad them. If there was a world championship for being bad, I might have won it back then. Now? I see worse every day. There are lines I won't kross.

Why? You'll learn soon enough, but I had a kouple more Deaths to die.

Scotland 2011: 584 dead.

☆☆☆

The Konduit

Abjekt Honesty 7.1-2
I am the resurrektion and the Death.
The one who believes in me will die, even though they live.
Whoever dies believing life is worthwhile,
may never live.
The truth did not set me free,
liberty was dependent on delivery.
The book of Abjekt Honesty.

Soundtrack: Lau – *The Unquiet Grave (Traditional)*
"I'll do as much for my true love,
as any young man may,
I'll sit and mourn all at her grave,
for twelve months and a day,
the twelve months and the day being up,
the dead began to speak,
'Oh who sits weeping on my grave
And will not let me sleep?'"

AnnoDomini[atrix]2012

There was a night when I met Death itself in my hometown. Yes, it was in another body, but isn't that where Death lives? The vehikle should have been beautiful, but she'd been kutting herself for so long, she just looked like some skribbles, a face, and four gangly limbs. She was all dressed up in cheap black klothing from cheap-shit-shops.

Earlier that night, I had been at a friend's; injekting ketamine for the first time since Luxor a few Deaths before. A friend and I had so much fun, it blew me away. I was back in the korridors of my mind with doors on either side stretching into oblivion. Every door that I entered had a little wise dude—a Yoda—with some wisdom or other. We must have sparked out kold and tore the very fabrik of existence wide open. We'd both kome to around the same time, and his living room furniture would be all toppled over. Tripping in such a vivid, unsettling, but beautiful way. Doors upon doors upon doors. One little dude told me: "Nothing makes sense. Follow neither logik nor flesh," wise words for a figment of my ketamine khaos. Truths were revealed that I feel I shouldn't have seen. It is still my belief that I went too far. Beyond what I should know. Beyond what anyone should know. Beyond the grave.

Little skribble face had slashed her wrists and was lying in the front of a church bleeding to Death. I kould hear, never mind see, her blood pumping out of her arm and neck. It sprayed, had a pause of pulse, then persisted in perhaps the polar opposite of rational. There were different shades of red, pink, orange, brown and purple, all over the beautiful blue of my 1978 Adidas Dublin trainers. If she hadn't been dying, I'd probably have told her to klean them, but she *was* dying. That much was obvious. So I let her off with what I would normally kall *sakrilegious kool shoe murder* and tried to help. I got on top of her and her blood was all over my entire existence. Who would bleed in such a way? Only Death. I knew this very well and understood she was a simple konduit. She was stupendously pretty, but also extremely damaged. I said to her and only her (not Death): "You're the best girl I know. Why do you do this to yourself? You're going to bleed to Death on the street!" Did it tear at my heart? Yes. Once upon a time, we had been very, very klose. She lived on her own and kut herself alone by then though.

She was dying. All she kould say in reply was: "Ugh… I want to die."

My next words, which still to this day give me shivers, konveyed an inner anger, hatred of life and monumental respekt for Death: "Well, if that's what you want—then fucking die!" I wish I was lying. It is kalled Detachment.

Death lives in the door at the end of the ketamine korridor. Death is very special. Death is so special that Death lives. I would never tell poor Death to die. You kannot live unless you die—a realisation of the simplest, most fundamental transition. Give it the respekt that I was inkapable of giving The Konduit. She was semi-konscious, said my name and something about letting her go. I peered deep into her soul. She whispered two lines from some shitty song or other I guess. Far too profound to be words of her own. I remember that, but not exaktly what she recited.

Then she died. Simple as. I was left wondering what I kould do.

My prokrastination/kontemplation lasted six meaningless sekonds before I plunged into chest kompressions and breaths. Then I was skreaming like a man possessed: "Wake up! Wake the fuck up! Breathe! I will not allow this! Live! Oh, *for fuck's sake*—my lips are kaked in your blood!"

Her eyes flashed wide open.

She looked like the headline photo of a girl being murdered in real time—alive in front of me, already dead for news sake, and not her own. She struggled to speak. Managed a very dim: "Ugh. Ah." It was nice to see those eyes that I knew only too well. We had been a little skhool version of boyfriend and girlfriend. But I only had those memories of her. I didn't know her by then.

I kan only be who I am: "Yes, lovely to see you too. Why do you kut open your veins all the time? I've phoned an ambulance. Your wounds will hurt bekause my t-shirt is wrapped around them. Keep your mouth shut. You'll be fine." Her blood started spraying again. A fountain of life from Death. Ten out of ten for saving her life was awarded to me by me. Everything was all groovy and kool.

The cheeky little skribble then said: "You're a good person, but I wanted to die. You kould've just let me go." Eyes so sincere, lips a little pert when she finished.

How do you admit that two minutes earlier, you told someone to die? Direkt and straight to the point of the matter at hand would be my own answer, I said: "I'm not that good—I told you to *fucking die* at first. But you will not bleed all over the road in front of a kross! Apparently, God saves. You died on the bastard's front doorstep!"

Her skribbled little cheeky face kracked what amounted to a smile. While I admit that I have absolutely no rekollektion of song lyriks recited by her, I do remember what she said next: "You look weird. Do you have lipstick on you nutkase?"

I felt it at once. What only amounts to something that I also have faded and unreliable memories about—being happy. Kall it survivalist humour if you like, I laughed so much that I kouldn't kontend with both that and the awful exhaustion after my hard work. I kollapsed down over her body and gave her a huge kuddle, before whispering into her ear: "Haha. No, it's your blood. I gave you breath and hotwired your heart. Lucky I was on a komedown and not high, or I'd have fucked it up!"

As I got up from draping her like Death's kloak, she said: "You've always been so good to me. Everyone says you're a bastard. But you're the best bastard I know." Yes, I kan admit it, everyone was very korrekt indeed. She was a fraktured anti-fairy from a ridikuled rapture that only she knew. Such pain. Literally all over her face. I owned exaktly what I was. Had taken the evidence presented to me, by not only her, but everyone else: "I don't hide it. A bastard with a heart eh!? Your blood is all over me—feel like I've been swimming in your kuts you mad bitch!"

Despite all the kutting and mauling of her very own body and soul, she was still so pretty when she smiled. Then it happened again: "Heehee. I kan't breathe... Ugh!" She died again under my kare. I kould not/would not allow it to happen.

I shouted like some headkase or other, who was kommunikating with a person and not a body: "Look at me! Every ten sekonds I'm giving you a big breath. Keep your eyes on mine!" There were no eyes, only Death. Face to face. I was thumping down on her heart, kould feel her blood bekome all krusty and rusty on my face and neck. A bad sign.

Then her eyes opened slowly. I felt so glowing and proud.

She kould only manage a pitiful: "Ugh. Help!"

My desperation and indifference in the face of revival was all over my exalted exhaustion. I managed a quietened: "Talk! You are bleeding slowly—the ambulance will be here quick-style. Keep alert! Talk."

She spat out a truth that disturbed me but did not sound all that absurd: "When you were a wee boy, you were always laughing; you had red cheeks and big blue eyes. Do you remember we were friends in primary skhool?"

I replied: "Of kourse. We played life to Death. I only laughed when I wasn't in trouble. Now I'm always krying eh." Then it sunk in. Truth isn't easy as is portrayed in films, or in songs and books. Truth is huge and savage. It unsettled me to an extent that maybe I wanted to die too for a sekond. True to life—my life—I was very much alive.

She said what everyone thought: "Shut up! It's not that bad. You've got a kool kar, a house and a girlfriend. She is so pretty!" But I was already in unbearable torment bekause I had put the kar and house in my girlfriend's name, to dodge tax, and money that almost every business in the kountry had klaimed. The outdated cherry on top of that partikular meringue was that my girlfriend had thrown me out. That was exaktly why I had been injekting ketamine in my friend's house—my girlfriend *owned* everything that I owned. I am an irresponsible dog that does not respekt its owner's trust at all. If they let me off the lead, the lokation I am in is ripped to shreds like a blank page of A4. I find new bones when I am out on my eskapades, strip them of any nourishment, but still give what is left regardless—just to look like a nice dog.

Never allow me enough freedom to run the house. The house will be run into an early grave.

With a deep sense of anger and grievous self-awareness, I told her: "I have no soul! But you—you only kut yourself. I kould maybe live with that. The things I have done to people?"

The question was sore, and I didn't really want to bring it up. But the deranged cirkumstance paid an advance on Abjekt Honesty. She said what others in the world I belonged to would have said: "Shut up! We both know they deserved it! Grasses, wife beaters and sex pests!"

Maybe they did. But the blood all over my present situation reminded me of my abhorrent krimes. I was in tears. I kouldn't believe it. I didn't want to know what I had done to other people, but I did. Memory kan be a huge pain in the arse if one is in the situation I found myself in.

The ketamine was well and truly gone. I was left with the stark reality of a life inside brutality.

She replied in a manner that almost gave me some form of déjà vu: "You're the best guy I know. Why do you do this to yourself?"

She was dying when I had said it to her after finding her. I do not believe she had been konscious enough to rekall what I had said to her. Yes, I cheated Death by bringing her back. When I weigh it against all the times that I've died, there is absence of meaning. I have never konsciously kounted my Deaths, even tried to until now. I don't think Death kounts a tally either.

However, I did walk down that korridor and stole back one of Death's own. I'm still not sure I really wanted to live back then, but I gave life in my very own way. Death had given me a glimpse. Eyeball to eyeball. Then I stole Death's gold. Left Death poorer than I had found Death. Like a girlfriend, in every sense. She is happy now. That is the only thing that really matters to me. People are far more beautiful, aktually—they are beautiful in every sense, when they smile. True story. Sometimes we still speak but she isn't all that well in the head. Neither is someone as kruel as me. I often find myself imagining her in a room. No windows. Nothing to do but kut herself dry. Just skribble herself to Death. Best idea is that we stay apart. She still talks to me, sometimes we even phone each other.

That's all. A shame really.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

Was I komplicit in a krime against Death? Not humanity. God knows I've been guilty of that—but Death. Or did Death know what Death was doing quite thoroughly?

The answer is yes and more yes—Death is Death. Death never forgets.

I knew that. Still—I thumped on her chest. Still—I spat in her mouth with exhaustion. Still—I forced life back into her dead body. The wind from that night kools my entire body, over a dekade later. I feel her rusty blood on my hands. I taste it every day. I hear her voice say: "Why do you do this to yourself?" Why indeed. I know now—bekause I kouldn't stop doing it to myself.

I had a konscience of some sort. Is a konscience knowledge buried so deep we pretend it isn't there? A guess, an ekho, an [un]edukated whisper. Drugs didn't kill my konscience; they stole it for 30 years. At times like this, I was only any good when I was in withdrawals, and bekause of what I was—extreme—I wasn't in withdrawals very often. When I was, some form of humanity rose its head. It says a lot that I kould only akt in a humane manner when I was too ill not to. When I suffered, I bekame what I should have been.

The truth, the Abjekt Honesty? When deep in suffering, it was the only time I had any komprehension of human rights. Suffering is *my* human right. It made me be the human who did the right thing. When I felt at my worst—I was aktually at my best.

Scotland 2012: 581 died as a direkt result of drugs.

☆☆☆

Death Eight

Abjekt Honesty 8.1-1
For Death so loved the world,
we were awarded a finality.
Whoever believes in Death shall not perish
but have eternal Death.
One will be regurgitated,
he who believes in nothing,
shall have belief of something forced upon him.

Soundtrack: Vic Chestnutt – *Flirted With You All My Life*
"Oh, Death you hector me,
decimate those dear to me
tease me with your sweet relief.
You are cruel and you are constant"

AnnoDomini[atrix]2015

I told you I was a part-time dier. I took two or three years off from my dying work bekause I was chasing a woman and being as decent as I kould manage. I eventually kaught her in my little net of false charm for a while. Then I had to deal with the Death of the only relationship I ever valued. Yes, a real Death too, but that wasn't even all that important to be honest.

She was a truly wonderful partner. We didn't have everything. But we did have one another—a lovely kottage, a kat kalled Wolf and a dog kalled Rabbit. Yes, that is right, my entire perspektive was so wrecked by then—that's what I kame up with when she let me name them. She was so wonderful that she should have been someone else's partner. It might have been ideal if I had the ability to be ideal. I wanted to love her. Somewhere.

In a normal story, this would be the love interest point. But this is not a normal story.

The results of my aktions bekame so akute and antagonising that I should have learned better by this point. I was gone, so absent from everything. Distant, diseased, and [I'm]morally [a]pathetik. Like a kaged bird within a khemikal kage; imaginary bars that barred anyone else from touching me. As detached as a general who had ordered his troops to kill one another.

I found her dad to be a painful little guy. An angry old dude, head still stuck in 1984. No—*not Orwell's 1984*, *you dipshit*—the miner's strike. While I totally agree with most of their issues, it happened dekades ago. There are sensible medikations for prolonged rage these days. Chill pills, *for fuck's sake*. And her mother—to my absurdity inflation and I—was like a malfunktioning, hot-dog-ladydroid in Westworld. Weird people. Her mum would kome through to the living room when we would visit, talking in her deep monotone: "Hello you two. Would you like a kup of tea and a wee biskuit?" I would have to pretend I was koughing bekause I kouldn't hold my laughter in. Then the krackpot would bring me a glass of water: "Here you go son. You should get that kough checked at a doktors!" The hilarity would end up evakuating through my nostrils.

I was on my last chance with her before too long. I kouldn't even play out the last chance dilemma properly. It made me very aware of the konsequences of my apparent human right to get fucked out my head on drugs. I never regretted it though—that isn't in me. I'm very glad of that fakt. Regret is a pain that I have swerved. My pain from other things balance is in overdraft though, so don't be thinking—*he deserves it*; I have more than enough to buy a small kountry. It was a really hard time in my life bekause I kouldn't do the things I would usually do:

No manipulation—I was running low on people I kould dance around.

No fighting—too old and too done. More likely to be punched than to punch.

No abnormal drug usage *(if only).*

Mayhem followed when she went on holiday.

If we ever bekome an item, NEVER leave me alone. I'm deadly serious here: NEVER!!!

My friend had been sniffing around the kottage for days. I dropped my day job and akkommodated him. He's hard work—too much tongue—likeable all the same. We got bored and decided our time would be better spent injekting speed—exaktly what we did. A half ounce between us in a few hours—not a good memory. We kept hitting up until we kouldn't hit back down. I'd rate that partikular drug experience a solid 1/10, like a wired marathon-runner with no track left. Nothing except their own veins. Hearts racing, brows dripping, tongues wagging. We talked ourselves into a dead-end. No sleep.

The next day, we took my kar to a blue lagoon near the village of Powmill in Fife. There are piktures of us by the water, maybe on social media, or maybe I deleted them. A shitty day under the Scottish sun. The water was bright blue bekause it was once a quarry and was filled with limestone. I think. Not entirely sure—I'm not a fucking geologist.

Then we went back to my house. I had to get some heroin and valium to deal with the ugly speed komedown. I was still in full-on-drug-mode, stuck in that shitty little town I grew up in, that I kouldn't get out of bekause I had once again put all my money into a house, kar and life—in someone else's name. If my name went on any applikation of any kind, anything substantial enough to be worth something was immediately used against me and money filtered out. I would not have bank akkounts. I kould not have phones bills. I should not have never paid tax or thought I was above paying back loans. Everything was in her name. I was failing like a failing champion of old. Everything, every piece of my shit, was going to shit.

Yet, I still tried.

Tried what?

To be normal.

Why? I thought that was how she and I kould survive being a kouple. You see, I wanted us to survive. But I had no semblance how to be, never mind how to be part of a kouple.

Her and I met on the first day of big skhool. I remember her vividly—beautiful, deep brown, pleading eyes, soft black hair—kut short—almost boyish, but far too good-looking for any hint of maskulinity. I asked her to be my girlfriend in the way I have always did such things—straight to the point, direkt, no prisoners taken. She said yes. We used to meet, kiss, touch each other and all the shit that boyfriends and girlfriends do when they are young.

Then I got bored and skrewed another girl. A krime against adolescent love—guilty as charged. Skhool was my house of fun, just for me. Fuck the other kids who thought the world was about them. I had vigorously watched gangster films and decided a reflektion of my film taste was in order—everyone at skhool should pay me protektion money. They did. Every person in every year paid a kollektor, employed by me. Yes—I was a bullying little bastard.

Absolutely no pride. I was little arsehole. A total little kunt.

Organised Bullying? Infantile Gangsterism? Damaged Devilism?

Once their money ran low, I went as far as stealing a drug information book from my doktor's office and wrote down the names of the drugs I wanted on little pieces of paper. Gave the lists to

any halfwit with a hand, telling them to look in their mother's medicine kabinet. Every morning, I would receive more drugs and more money. I was outrageously bad, even back then. I suppose that kommonsense says—her and I should not have met on the first day of skhool. She should not have fallen in love with me. Not back in our skhool days, and definitely not when we bekame adults and had grown apart.

Poor woman.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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Imagine a mistake that doesn't just define you but stands all over your face and then pisses on it for good measure. A mistake so tumultuous it redefines what you are. An ekho from a world that might have been.

She was such a mistake. The ekho is endless and severe and everywhere. Such pain. Forever.

What I didn't realise until now is that when she went away, I filled the hole with substances and idiots bekause I kouldn't handle being left alone in a house.

As for me at skhool, I apologise when I see them, if I see them.

Some regrets get through the haze[s] and the lack of humanity.

☆☆☆

The Abjekt Bus Ride

Abjekt Honesty 8.1-2
If we konfess,
Pops is faithful and just
to eat both us and a bus load of others.
To kleanse us from all redemption.

Soundtrack: Joy Division – *Twenty Four Hours*
"So this is permanence,
love's shattered pride,
what once was innocence,
turned on its side,
a cloud hangs over me,
marks every move,
deep in the memory,
of what once was love."

AnnoDomini[atrix] Linearity [De]Fusion

Hello there. I don't suppose you know when the bus is due? I've been sat here like some senseless daydreamer for ages. Twenty past. Kool, thanks. Only five minutes then. Let me move my rucksack so you kan take that seat. Someone was pissing on those two when I got here.

You've read the madness. Maybe lived it too. I wrote it. As far as I know—you kan't unread it. We're waiting for the same bus, so do you want to know where old Pops kame from? This isn't nice, but it's Abjekt Honesty. Sit down. Or skip ahead a few pages and katch me sinning more against love.

Honesty is dead. People chase truth so hard they drag lies behind them like toilet paper stuck to their shoe, skid on it, and land face-first in shit. Maniaks, if you ask me. There's one koming out the bookies now—the lokal minister. Apparently, he tells the truth. But he lies to his wife every day, says he's helping the kleaners in the church. What he's aktually doing is betting on Red Rum reappearing as a geriatrik horse with disabilities.

Idiot—wasting money and honesty in one fell swoop.

Isn't it strange we have phrases like honest to a fault and brutal honesty?

Who is honest?

You?

Me?

No. We're all liars in one way or another.

The bus is koming. Hear the engine krawling up the hill?

Take a minute. Relax.

Oh, *for fuck's sake*, you look like you're sweating. Don't worry, kalm down, it's okay. If you want to know, if you're sure—

Then hop aboard the bus. Get komfy!

It's good to have you with me.

Ewww—kan you smell that stench?

There's a Death on this bus somewhere. It smells like the Death of respekt for elders—putrefied in a cheap blender.

When I was fourteen, our skhool had been split between an old block and a new one, with a road running down the middle. On the new block side, in a gable-end kottage, was Pops' khemist shop. We used to sneak in at breaktime, stealing kondoms and those annoying whistle lollies they give to little kids. One day, we were up to our necks in rubbers when Pops kame over and asked if we wanted to kome through the back for a kup of tea.

That's why we kalled him Pops. Not bekause he was a jolly, kind old dude. He popped up where he shouldn't and wanted to skrew skhoolchildren.

We went through. I stayed near the entrance, making sure my friends all kame in. When we reached the front room, there were no seats left. I was about to ask someone to move when Pops appeared with a deckchair and set it next to a big white box.

I said thanks and sat down.

The tea was lovely.

I sat my kup on the box. It made a kreaking sound—like a koffin door opening in an old-fashioned vampire film. As the door swung open fully, I saw lots of tubs. Then it klicked: it wasn't a normal box. It was a dangerous drugs box. The first label I read was lorazepam. I was just a junior junkie back then—but a good one. Every tub went straight into my pockets.

Stop the bus. *For fuck's sake*—stop!

Here's the Abjekt Honesty—Pops was a lonely old man. He worked through his retirement bekause his wife had died. We kalled him Pops bekause he was old and smiled.

That's it. Fuck all interesting about it.

His front room looked like a doktor's office: fake leather, komputer, photos, and things I kan't remember. I was the last in, making sure none of my friends grassed me in. I knew exaktly what I was doing. So many goodies, every drug under the sun.

Now I wonder—was it loneliness that brought him to us?

I just wanted drugs.

I never thought about konsequences.

Was he after more than kompany?

Maybe. His wandering hands suggested so.

Men's hands and boys' legs should never meet. Not in khemist shops, not anywhere.

I remember how he looked at us—maybe hungry, maybe hollow. I kan't tell. I never will. Sometimes, in dreams, I see his hands—not touching, twitching—as if they want to konfess something I won't allow myself to hear. Something I'll never know. A vague question unfolding, sore and slow.

What I do know is—I pushed myself into it.

I spoon-fed the lies to my friends.

I helped myself to the substances.

All me.

Do I feel guilty now? Yes. I feel like I swallowed every sin in the history of humanity.

But I was a child. I was only starting to understand life.

This was when I murdered respekt for elders.

Okay, back on the bus. No seats left—just stand.

After a quick kuppa in Pops' joint, we hit the street. I told everyone what I had. We all got wasted. The next day—a friend jumped off his balkony thinking he kould fly. Broken arms. Kasted like a robot. Another passed out on his bike, krashed into the back of a van. Broken kollarbone. Black eyes. His neck in a brace like a pair of murderous hands.

The fair was in town. We wrecked it. Someone had pushed over a plastik bin full of goldfish—flashes of gold twitching like elektricity in the grass. Fair—fucked. Goldfish—dead. Boys—broken under a beautiful blue sky. Locked into the kurse of drugs.

The day after, the mums were kalling each other. We were all sleeping too much.

Then kame the whispers. Something had happened. I was the last to know exaktly what.

Old Pops was charged. He lost the shop. Then he was found dead. In a hot room. His body baked in the summer heatwave.

I kried Pops out of my system, alone. I was already too grown up to show anything but laughter and rage. I didn't want him dead. But I was komplicit.

Exekution by proxy.

I erekted the skaffold.

If he was after our innocence, maybe his hands were already dirty. Maybe we were all in that room for the wrong reasons. But blaming Pops is too easy. I brought the blade, even if I didn't know I was holding it.

Okay—off the bus. Last stop.

No happy ending. I made it very klear to you at the start, this isn't a fucking fairy tale. It's not even a ride—it's a loop.

And we're right back where we started.

I'm getting off. You koming?

Hurry up! Follow me back to 2015...

She was on a Florida holiday with her friend. A beautiful break in the Everglades. Apparently too hot—but why would I even kare? I was too busy krashing our kar, getting loans against our house. Buying new kars, driving without a licence or insurance—krashing them too. Not taking the dog out. Obsessed with Adidas trainers.

She returned to walls that stank of bleach and bullshit. I didn't go food shopping—kouldn't even prepare her a meal after she'd flown halfway around the world. She burned away to beautiful ashes, ignited by the heat of my addiktion. Kaught alight from the fire roaring out my blood. Such a shame. It's sore bekause I did love her, which made a change from me lying to women when I needed a favour. She was so sad. Those big brown eyes konveyed a hurt that I still feel.

Our love was dying.

Like—like me.

"Rehab!" Was the kry when she got home—or what was left of it. She was so into me going to rehab and finding myself. But how does a person who is so gone, who has been so gone their entire life, find themselves when they didn't even want to know themself?

She kried. I lied.

You've heard this bit before—me getting away with any krime repeats. Monotony—my favourite routine. Lie. Apologise. Lie again. She truly believed my bullshit. A true innocent whose goodness was buried under the misery I brought into our relationship.

I went to the rehab anyway and found fuck all but misery. It was in Greenock, a town that had been very rich at one point thanks to the slave trade. Now it was just filled with slaves to khemikals.

For most of my time there, I was obsessed with imaginary people, like Migs—the awful little man from *Silence of the Lambs*, who threw sperm in Clarice Starling's face. I made up stories about him and told my roommate about Migs living on top of the tower near our window. He watched us from there and sometimes popped over and left notes on my roommate's bed. He even wrote one in his own blood, telling my roommate to stop masturbating so loudly.

Naughty Migs. What a wicked thing to write—especially in a rehab full of wankers.

When I get bored, I thoroughly entertain myself.

Yes, my mind is so damaged, I kome up with idiots like Migs.

I spent drug money on klothes instead.

My keyworker was always telling me that drug addiktion komes out in so many different ways. I wasn't ready to hear about variables back then. Was more interested in spending fortunes I didn't really have on klothes. He kept asking me if I wore expensive klothes to feel better.

I kept saying: "No, expensive klothes are kooler!"

He'd kontinually ask me what I was wearing and to kount it all up.

I kouldn't have given two shits if I was wearing more expensive klothes in one day than your average junkie had altogether. He kould though: "Your girlfriend has to work to pay to kome to see you. Yet, you're wearing Valentino jeans (£200), a Moschino shirt (£200) and vintage Adidas trainers (£200+). Where does all the money kome from?"

I did what I did and lied: "It just komes. I dunno, *fuck's sak*e!"

Of kourse I knew. It kame from manipulating almost every business in the kountry to align with my vision of a world for me only. Want an example? I bought a pair of boots for £200. After three months, I got bored, ripped the lace hole and took them back. Got a new pair from the lovely girl behind the kounter. Then I had a revelation—I kould do it every week as long as I went to different stores from the same chain. That £200 pair of boots lasted ten years and was aktually dozens of £200 boots in all manner of styles.

Kost the chain £20,000.

My feet looked good though.

Still do aktually.

One night, the rehab took us to a meeting. Fourteen of us packed in the back of their little van. After the meeting, my friend was kaught pissing at the back of the van—in a kar-park—and was kicked out.

I took that as my kue and left with him.

Too many tongues telling stories to the leaders.

Not long after—my friend died full-time. So big, funny and warm.

It's like a mockery of mortality when I think of all the dead friends, and me left here writing this shit. If he was anyone but a friend—I'd have let Pops know and he'd have finished him off. Pops visits sometimes. But the old bastard is dealing with the aftereffekts of being dead too many times. When he speaks, he rhymes and makes up his own language.

It skares me. Is that my future?

He does a great Joe Biden impersonation—though maybe he doesn't know he is doing it. He's off his rocker. "Vampile Dementia," his doktor friend, from vampire world kalls it. The first kase in history.

Back in normal life—no rehabs, Migs or Pops fantasies—my partner didn't trust me bekause I left rehab early. It wasn't that she didn't trust me, she just kouldn't believe a word that I said. Work it out yourself. I told her I was taking the kar that I bought her to a meeting in Glasgow.

Forty-five minutes later: I was at another woman's flat.

Two minutes later: I was skrewing her.

Thirty sekonds later: We decided to get some krack.

We ended up skoring the stuff from a kouple in a dodgy block of flats. They kept offering me more. I kept agreeing with their offering routine and buying more. More and more and more and more. That night, I spent a shitload of money. The next day we did the same.

I didn't pick up a physikal dependency from krack but I used heroin to kome down. After two days, I had a heroin habit again. When an individual has been addikted to opiates before—the physikal dependency returns quicker and quicker after each withdrawal. The woman whose house I had made myself welkome to, told me to shoplift when I was running out of money.

I told the truth: "I've never stolen anything from shops. I kan't do it."

"So, how did you manage dekades on every drug under the sun?"

"I manipulated the system. I manipulated *every* system, sorry. If a manager glanced at me suspiciously in a big store, I'd phone kustomer service and kon them. They give out money like doktors give out fucking drugs!"

She looked unimpressed.

I had konsidered shoplifting in a big city with trained sekurity. That wasn't going to happen. Why? I just told you—I kan't do it. I have what kriminals kall "a blue-light on my head." So, I used my manipulation [sk]ills to earn money—found a receipt for two men's trousers, outside a big store that I won't tell you the name of. Walked over to the rail, picked the ones out that matched the kode on the receipt, took them up to the till—full £200 refund sekured.

Was on my way back to the woman's house but stopped for drugs, in that dodgy block again. They wouldn't allow me to injekt drugs in their house that day.

I ended up in a filthy flat with a guy who had klean needles.

I kouldn't find a vein.

He offered to find one on my leg.

"Help yourself pal," I said. He was in and out like a shoplifter on order-to-steal missions. Found a vein on my thigh. Nailed it—I was impressed. Pulled the plunger back. Then, take a guess. Permanent log out achieved. Just in time for the quarter past four train to hell.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

When and where is it right for a person to have died so many times that it doesn't matter? I want to say that it isn't real. It is beyond any imagined horizon of real.

I spoke to a nurse about it one night. She told me it is kalled a Klinikal Death. The person's heart and breathing ceases. Then there is Biologikal Death—the irreversible Death of cellular funktion. Finally, there is Brain Death—where the brain funktion dies forever. That's why I kall myself a part-time dier. I was only doing a third of the work that someone who doesn't kome back does. At first—yes—it was just one of my krude jokes. Then I found out the truth and it stuck.

And it is time for Abjekt Honesty—every single time my heart stopped and was revived, it enabled me to kause more harm to myself, to others, and to a society that was sick fed up.

Finally—the nurse liked me. She wasn't well and neither was I. So, I told her that anyone who gets klose to me ends up dead. She kommitted suicide a few weeks later. True story.

If you must judge me, then judge me for the fakts I present. I know I do.

☆☆☆

|||Thump—the world started shaking like a speaker turned up too loud—Thump|||

Yes, that is right—a paramedik brought me back again.

Yet again.

Repetition of Death.

I almost feel like asking if you feel sick yet.

I won't, in kase you are as manipulative as me, and ever bump into me and tell me: "That horrible story you wrote made me puke! I want to klaim kompensation for the trousers and shoes I ruined bekause of that awful shit."

The police took the injektor away and charged him with attempted murder I think. Ambulance people surrounded me. It took a while for them to leave. They left me in a house that wasn't mine. There wasn't anything in it except two broken chairs, a broken television, some spoons and needles. There was terribly skrawled graffiti on the walls and inside my head.

Would love to tell you that it made me want to stop, it didn't. I just felt bored.

Death was dead. It had happened so many times that I had murdered Death. Poor little Death. I walked back to the woman's house, but she already knew I'd overdosed and died. Wanted nothing to do with me. Was kicked out of her front door.

Kalled my girlfriend, but she knew too. Also wanted nothing to do with me—except I should bring the yellow sports kar home.

Shit! I had kompletely forgotten about the kar.

Still had the keys, so I went downstairs.

I'd krashed it into a bollard at some point.

The bumper was kracked like my mind.

I took it back to her.

I'm very good at doing what I need to do when konsequences rear their chins above me. She told me to leave the kar at the door and to piss off back to the city with my "new slut." I kried like a child who was barred from going to the ice-kream van. Bawling at first. Then ludikrously livid. I was like the origin of every metaphor in the history of children krying metaphors. An idiotik star jump wrapped up tight in tears of self-inflikted tragedy. I broke my own heart—she did nothing wrong at all. The weight was unbearable.

I was sick.

I hurt.

My existence was enveloped in Abjekt Pain.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

✯✯✯

I think I will take this opportunity to say life is shit. Then a little bit older shit. Older again shit. Then you die.

Reality. I only wrote this sentence so I kould write REALITY one more time. Why?

Bekause that is what matters.

It's all very well going on holiday, but you know this one I'm sure: *Back to reality!*

Whatever you do—getting high, going on holiday, fucking like it's going out of fucking fashion—it's great to get away. What really matters is what komes next.

This is my next—a life[Death]time of wrong honed into something worth doing it for.

I don't even know how I kan take responsibility for the love I had for her. What do you do with love when love is not reciprokated? What do you do with love when—as you just read—you are so guilty of krimes against love? What does a person do who has no love? Not even for themselves.

Die?

Tried that.

I suffer so klinikally in the disorder I divulge within.

Nothing but a specimen on the slab of my own soul dissetikon and interrogation.

✯✯✯

I was homeless and stayed a kouple of nights in a friend's little kave. The kouncil gave me a house within days. I didn't even want to be [t]here. It was a brutal existence. I was left with hometown adversity. My manipulation and its konsequences. Yet another new girlfriend who popped in every few days for a quick fuck. And new neighbours who didn't want to know me.

Nobody should have given me a new house within days.

I had to get back on methadone, or my veins would resemble a burned tree's branches. But it takes six weeks to get put on a methadone preskription. I only had days. Had to figure something out. I went to a mental health ward and told them I was injekting heroin, krack, ketamine, speed, ekstasy and vodka. All in the same syringe. I don't suppose that it took much skheming after I said that. They quickly took me in. I was put in a ward full of normal people. Normal people with real problems. My only problem was that I wanted methadone. The psykhiatrist said: "I'll keep you for the weekend and fill you with opiates and valium. We'll wait for the methadone people! Yeah?"

"Yeah, indeed. I'll wait forever if you keep me in your five-star drug ward."

I was wasted from the drugs all weekend. And topped up with other's medikation surplus.

I should make it very klear here: I would never take a normal mental health patient's medikation.

But in Scotland there is an overflow of addiktion into mental health services. It is a problem that should have been dealt with a long, long time ago. It wasn't, so I took advantage.

I was released from my first trip to the ward. The psykhiatrist kept his word. The new woman I was fucking picked me up. We went for green slime from lovely khemist ladies once again.

Everything was kool. I moved in with her. Even bought her two lovely, little white rats. Probably more human than I was. Two months later, we split up, I had to take the rats back to the shop bekause I knew I kouldn't look after them alone.

I kouldn't look after myself.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

☆☆☆

Don't feel bad for hating me. I would hate me too. Do you want me to lie? I will not do that. I lied for so long that it bekame sekond nature. When I ran out of things to lie about, I had to inverse my extreme lies into extreme truths. That's why I ran with Abjekt Honesty—survival—plain and simple. I'm not good at many things but, as you know, survival is a speciality of mine.

The methadone/mental health ward nonsense was the result of dekades of drug addiktion. Any drug addikt as old as me will, if they are telling you the truth, say they did some horrible things to survive. It is katch of the life you choose. If a person has no survival [sk]ills, they would be better off being addikted to masturbating.

Give your like to a man sat on his arse begging. Give it to a beautiful baby. Give it to someone emotionally damaged. They'll appreciate it. I wouldn't. Told you before—I'm not here to be liked.

Scotland—706 souls gone.

☆☆☆

Death Nine

Abjekt Honesty 9.1-1
For I know the plans I have for you, deklares Pops.
Plans for a lovely Death and not for a shitty life.
To give you an anti-future and some dope.

Soundtrack: Godspeed You! Black Emperor – *The Dead Flag Blues*
"The government is corrupt,
and we're on so many drugs,
with the radio on and the curtains drawn,
we're trapped in the belly of this horrible machine,
and the machine is bleeding to Death,
the sun has fallen down,
and the billboards are all leering,
and the flags are all dead at the top of their poles."

AnnoDomini[atrix]2017

I was living in Birmingham with yet another girlfriend. True love struck again. Someone give me a loyalty kard for my dedikation to bondage and bad decisions. I wanted to stop dying. Stop using hard drugs, all drugs aktually. Stop using women. One thing at a time though. The drugs were the worst of it—everything else was kollateral damage. We lived in Kings Heath. Nice area. Karnivals, gigs, a steady stream of distraktions. One day, I walked out my front door to find a huge Ferris wheel outside. I spent the day high in both literal and metaphorikal terms. Stuff like that helped. It took little bites out of my obsession. Little bites out of the need to get obliterated on substances.

Before I even got to Birmingham, there was a rollerkoaster ride through a riot of my own making.

What happened follows:

I was deep in withdrawals—kouldn't take enough drugs to fix it anymore. Nothing worked. Ended up krashing in some gangster's house in Aberdeen. There was a strikt: "No Mind-Bending Substances" rule. Pain in the arse, but at least the neighbourhood was nice. The whole city was built on drugs—people taking more than me—and that's really saying something. Methadone kept me about vertikal—but they kept kutting the dose, like tapering was a merciful akt. They kalled it reduktion. But it was more like a komedown that lasted forever One kold sunny morning I started talking to my next-door neighbour. She was an alkoholik, klearly chatting me up to skore money for a beer. I saw an angle too.

"What preskriptions do you get?" I asked. Being out out of order was my natural setting by then.

Any sane person would've handed her the kash. I turned it into a kommodity.

She raised her eyebrows interested and said: "Hmmm, yeah... My daughter's hyperaktive. She gets amphetamines from the doktor. But I don't give her it bekause it kalms her down—but also turns her into an instant insomniak."

"Ritalin?" I asked.

She nodded. I made a beeline to the khemist for some fresh syringes and grabbed a bottle of vodka. You kan guess the rest by now—obviously, she got her kan of Super Lager.

Fast-forward a day. I was still awake, fuelled by an endless supply of ritalin and vodka. Was meant to be going out for dinner with the gangster. He'd be on me like a pack of junkies on an ounce of heroin when they were in withdrawals if I was too far gone. Ten minutes before dinner, I injekted a final kocktail of ritalin and vodka. Ordered haggis and didn't eat it. He talked shit. I said: "Uh-huh!" He told me he'd be staying the night. That was unfortunate, to say the least, but I didn't tell him that. It was his house, after all. So I said it was a good idea—he did, after all, kommit krimes for a living—it's good to take a break from hurting people.

He smiled and nodded, all polite.

Back at the house, I was stuck in the bedroom staring at the walls. He was taking me to rehab in the morning. Long night ahead. Then a bright idea hit—use heroin one last time before rehab.

Everyone who's ever gone to rehab thanks to a heroin addiktion knows this move—final farewell with the love of your life. The long goodbye. The only problem was the drugs were miles away.

I stole a child's skooter and bombed it downhill. You know the drill by now. Drugs went in and everything went hazy. Next thing I knew, I was in a town outside Glasgow kalled Kirkintilloch, skoring heroin. I don't know what happened between Aberdeen and there. Kan't remember. Don't have the memory, so I won't bullshit you.

Eventually, I was back in Greenock, west of the city, about to try and get and get back into the rehab I had left. The first gangster had turned into a new gangster. I don't know how. I wasn't sure if they'd kondukted a handover, or I was so wasted I was hallucinating new gangsters into being. Eventually the new gangster turned out to be a real person. I preferred the first one, but I suppose he had to get back to hurting people.

The new gangster told me no rehab would take me in my kondition.

Then: "Have you taken your last dose of methadone today?"

Shit.

I'd forgotten.

It was still in my pocket, so I did the *tiredness + ritalin + heroin + methadone* equation in my head fast. Yes, it would guide me through the day, quite thoroughly. Very komfortably. But I was already wasted and there was going to be a problem. I kould feel the bastard waiting for me to hand him the bottle over.

No chance. That was never going to happen.

Kut to Greenock Harbour on the Clyde estuary: Two grown men fighting over a bottle of methadone on the end of a pier. He didn't think I needed it. I knew I wanted it. The bottle fell on the ground. I stood on his hand until he let go of it. Then I picked it up, downed the whole thing and threw the bottle past the harbour wall. The ride up to rehab was full of tense silence. I was bleeding from my nose. So was he. His fingers were also broken. *For fuck's sake*, this Abjekt Honesty karryon is going to lead me back to jail if I keep it up. Keep it quiet.

The rehab people knew I was too far gone. Four kowboys followed me into a toilet for a piss test. I kouldn't piss—was full of uppers, downers and all-arounders. They kept asking. Pleading. I sat stuck on the toilet, in and out of konsciousness.

"Pee!" One of them said through his teeth.

Then he shut the whole rehab shop down: "Sorry That's it. You'll have to go home."

Whatever. I was already halfway home by the time the gutless bastard made the decision. He aktually proved my point to me—that I should've used all the substances I did.

That took me down south... Was so filled with valium, I kouldn't even remember getting down to Birmingham on the train. Or meeting her, or her son, in their home. My mind kame back online when I was sat at a dinner table with a family I didn't know. Her dad was Jamaican. He liked to smile with big, dazzletastik teeth. Smoked the odd joint and wore one of those kool koloured string

beanie hats and shades. That was all good. People who look kool are easier for me to like. He was blind. Every time he went to the toilet, he tripped on something and fell on the floor. Yes, of kourse, I helped him up—I just told you I liked him—I will always help people I like.

Her mother? She was a rusty old ring from Manchester. A heartless old bastard. I found that out within minutes. If she had tripped and fell on her way to the bog—I'd have stuffed her mouth with wet bog roll and turned her into a taxidermy artwork. I finished their ugly Piri-Piri meal. Kept imagining it had eyeballs, face bones and sexual organs in it.

Then I went out the back garden with Mr Dazzletastik teeth for a joint.

Her son? A painful little foot blister. He told me he spent an hour at a bus stop bekause some skhoolmates were bullying him. I didn't like that. I dare say he didn't like my answer to all his problems: "Punch the kunt in the throat! People expekt you to go for their face and don't protekt their throat. Hit him on the Adam's Apple. Then he will buckle and you kan destroy his face!"

No, of kourse he wouldn't do that shit, bekause he was a good little boy and I'm a bastard. He kould stew in his little world of online gaming as far as I was koncerned.

I would just skrew his mother. Even be decent enough to keep the noise down while doing so. Progress again.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

☆☆☆

It was my way. I knew all about bullying from my time at skhool. I wanted him to stand up for himself. So, I told him exaktly what I would do. My dad always said: "One day, you'll get bullied, and you'll know how it feels."

Funny thing is it never happened. If I was ever told anything by anyone who had authority over me, I went out of my way to ensure they were wrong.

But I did projekt. I didn't know what it felt like, but I sure as hell knew how to do it.

Truth? I hated what I had been and wanted him to absolve me somehow. If I helped him, maybe I kould forgive myself.

And no—Abjekt Honesty—I don't know how that feels either.

I kan't even projekt that bekause I am so far away from self-forgiveness.

☆☆☆

I was still on methadone and had lied to my doktor, said I was working. That meant I would pick up a weekly amount:

Reality: I was only dependent on 40ml per day—enough to kill one adult.

+

Manipulation: I konned her into believing I was on 150ml per day—enough to kill four adults.

=

Once a week, I walked into a khemist and kollekted 1050ml of methadone in huge big brown bottles. Then I walked along the street, got back home and downed over 750ml—enough to wipe out a church khoir of adults**.**

It was revolting and didn't even make me high. Just hyper.

One day, during that time, I wanted to get wasted. But kouldn't buy valium anywhere in Birmingham. Midlands' drug dealers aren't stupid. They know that people won't buy as much heroin or krack when they are annihilated on valium. They just don't sell the things. Shitty city when there is only a 4/10 rating for heroin and 2/10 for krack. Very poor-quality drugs. I kouldn't get high. What a shame. Give the child some Klass A drugs and shut him up, *for fuck's sake*.

God must have been watching out for me and supplied me with an online drug vendor. They had everything I was after, but I had to wait until the royal mail drug kourier service posted it through the letterbox. I'm sure you kan imagine me standing in the hallway staring at the door, salivating. The postman eventually did his job and posted my drugs to me. Time to get high was upon me. Yet another week of my life lost. I kan only remember the beginning, getting higher and higher and then—narkotik-induced nothingness.

My friend rang as I was koming back down to the ground.

He was in rehab north of Greenock and wanted me to go. I didn't want to initially, due to my recent rehab experiences klose by. To make matters worse—the rehab was a khristian set-up. I still had a great deal of diffikulty with khristianity. But after the mountains of drugs I had chucked down my throat, I was in serious withdrawals. No amount of piss-poor heroin or methadone kould take it away.

I had a few of the online-drugs-service tablets left and tried to take them sensibly.

Had no chance of doing anything sensibly, however.

A few more days of distorted memory followed.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

☆☆☆

I drank enough methadone to wipe out half of Birmingham. Me with a shitload of anything is a bad idea. And having it delivered through my letterbox had me saying: “Postmen are great!”
The things I have done on valium make no sense to me at all.
I would love to be able to say: ‘It wasn’t me!’ But it was.
It travels to very similar receptors in your brain as alkohol. Like when you drink too much and everything bekomes blurry, you kan’t remember; you do things you wouldn't do if you were sober. I’ve lived it for 30 years.
Valium didn’t kreate someone else; it exposed my inner hatred of myself to the entire world. It eradikates all filters such as shame, love, respekt, fear, responsibility, restraint and disgust. I don’t hate much at all these days, but I do hate the person I bekame when I took valium.
Scotland drug Deaths were 934 this year.

☆☆☆

I began to entertain the possibility I kould go to this khristian rehab my friend was raving about. First barrier: my new girlfriend told me she was pregnant.

No way.

Gulp.

Fuck.

Shit.

After agreeing we should abort, I went to the klinik with her. Sat in a shitty little waiting room while they did what had to be done. I saw it like that. She did too. No shame. None at all. Just remember, I was a drug addikt in the most extreme sense—would you prefer we had the child and it went into the kare system? I wouldn't. When reality and guilt meet in a boxing ring, fists taped with broken glass, there kan only ever be one winner. Reality smashed guilt's face wide open and walked away grinning.

Then I got bored again in rekord time. I'd run out of doktors to fuck over, so I told the lokal vet in Kings Heath—the benzos he'd preskribed for one of her dogs got soaked and ruined when the extension roof buckled in the rain. He preskribed the tablets. I took them all.

Didn't even tell the Birmingham version of her until I was on the train.

I'd had enough of both her and the city. Made my way back to Greenock. The khristian rehab was waiting, nestled between rolling green meadows. Why? I still don't know. Not why they akcepted me—that's not the point. Why did I go? Withdrawals. Plain and simple.

It was almost xmas though. I was hungry—not only to be free from addiktion, but to eat food I expekted would be delivered to my table. The people seemed nice enough. Pops didn't like the place, obviously. Too many krucifix[tions]. He stayed away.

After a few days, I was settled in and komfy. Then I found myself alone in their kitchen—staring at an iron baking tray, filled to the brim with raw steak and blood. If you like your steak rare, you'll know that a great deal of the flavour is in the blood—or, more akkurately, in the Myoglobin (that red stuff that *looks* like blood). I tried to empty all the liquid into my mouth at once.

An old lady walked in just as I was nourishing my weary body. Red all over my face, dripping from my chin, all over my shirt and their klean floor. I must have looked like Pops after a good night in vampire world. She went straight to management and had me investigated: "He is sinister!"

If only she knew how sinister—I'm pretty sure she wouldn't have kalled me that. Or let me into their shitty rehab. After xmas dinner and into the New Year, suddenly I was reminded why they thought I was sinister. Had to go to a meeting with management. They were deeply koncerned about my deranged ways. They kept repeating that ugly word: "Sinister. You are sinister! People kome here to get well and find God. Not to kontinue being sinister."

"Oh, kome on to fuck! Hardly sinister, is it, eating raw farmyard animals? Look at it—objektively. Take your head out of all that societal shite. Kooking them—that's the real sin! Kill them, then

kook them? No? Wasn't hard enough for the poor bastards to be slaughtered—they've got to be roasted, boiled, fried too. No peace. Not even in Death. *For fuck's sake!"*

It was a solid argument. I only wanted a taste of steak.

The real krime? Society's obsession with rules. Fucking blood-police.

Still, I agreed to go to a church in town to meet an old lady kalled. No problem.

We met. She had a daughter with Down syndrome. At that time, it reminded me of a horror film. I kan't remember what one exaktly. Maybe it was my train wreck of a perspektive. Before I knew it, I was stuck in this freaky room with the old lady on one side, and an old man on the other. Both praying in tongues. They were exorcising me!

I get that they truly believed they were helping. But my head wasn't spinning. I wasn't vomiting glow in the dark shit. I certainly wasn't skrewing myself with a krucifix[tion]. The cheeky bastards thought I was possessed.

Didn't know I used to be kalled Satan in hell.

No idea about the pentagram fire.

Klueless regarding the black magic[k].

The black sun on my neck should've told them everything.

They had no klue. If I had a choice at that moment—I'd have chosen the devil. Desperation brought me there. Not khristianity. Weird place. A nightmare wrapped in prayer for someone like me. I lasted three months and managed to ditch a huge methadone dependence in the process.

Not for the last time...

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

I don't know what to say. I do know what I want to say: "Mad old whacko bastards!"

It's diffikult bekause I understand they really wanted to save my soul.

A soul kan only be saved if the person is willing. I wasn't willing—just busy killing everything in sight. I thought addiktion was ugly when I was either in withdrawals or running out of money. When I filled myself back up, and when someone filled up my bank, I was back in: "Addiktion isn't bad, it's my human right to get high!" mode.

To be truly willing, a person must be broken.

Back then? My soul wasn't worth saving.

Too defiant. Too arrogant. Too hostile to be helped.

☆☆☆

I was more interested in the disciple Paul than Jesus. Their saviour was a klever bullshitter and, if I'm honest, I found his story boring. Bullshitter or not, Paul used to be a bad guy. I kould relate for a start. And maybe, just maybe—he was the integral presence who made that ugly religion possible. Himself and Barnabas were always on the move, doing what they felt they had to do. I respekt that kind of shit. He's af[in]fekted billions of human beings. Took khristianity to the Gentiles. He promoted it, even advertised it (thousands of years ahead of his time).

His nomadik stories were great.

The final book of the bible was still my favourite though.

Still obsessed after so many years—dekades.

I kouldn't be in that khristian hell some people believe is an earthly heaven.

Then I moved in with a woman who'd been given a house by the khristians—yet another girlfriend. She told me to keep it quiet bekause the khristians didn't like me (too sinister). I didn't have much money at the time. She did though, thanks to working up north on a fish-farm all week. So, I got her to fill up my akkount, then hit the streets and skored some shit.

Walking down the street, minding my own business: "Beep beep, big man!"

I stopped, kurious who'd say such a strange thing to a pedestrian.

Then I saw the Abjejkt Kruelty of dekades long addiktion—a man who'd lost both legs from injekting in his groin. He was on one of those little elektrik buggies. I watched him manoeuvre akross the road on his muscle-buggy, it even had alloys. He pulled up outside a khemist and waited. A lady popped out with his methadone in a kup. He downed it in one followed by a: "Burp."

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

Did that skare me? No. It *should* have. But it didn't. I aktually found it hilarious.

The town is like the unofficial drug kapital of Scotland. I remember thinking: *Maybe I should lose both legs and get the green slime delivered*.

Yes. That bad.

That poor man—buggy-bound, on his way to the khemist for methadone—he'll be dead by now.

So much Death. Scotland needs to change. It needs to break free from those torture blocks. Either that or it needs to re-derange. Sometimes losing your marbles leads you all the way to the marble quarry.

Seriously—how many more will die from substance abuse before we put our mouths to use?

This is not *behind klosed doors* territory. It is everywhere. Look out your window.

Do something. Do anything. Do everything.

We were three times higher than the European average when I died my first Death in 2002.

By 2017, we were surpassing the kontinent over SEVEN TIMES.

☆☆☆

She was bekoming a pain in the arse bekause she kept koming down for the weekend to live in her own pad. *How dare she!* I remember thinking. We did some really twisted shit together bekause she was open and willing, and bekause it kame very naturally to me.

We had a load of decent heroin that was just off the boat.

I was hitting up like I was queuing up to die.

And, of kourse, I did. What follows is her akkount:

"You were brown bread—dead as a lump of lead! No pulse. No kolour except blue.

I honestly didn't know what to do. Tried to restart your heart, but you were kold to the touch. There wasn't much point in trying.

Five minutes in, I walked out of the toilet and sat in the other room—blinking my way through a nervy apokalypse. My nerves were in the palm of my hand. Then I walked back to look at you, but you looked gone. Tried your pulse again. There was just dead flesh. Walked back out and hovered around. Looked at the klock—fifteen minutes had passed.

Then I went out to the shop. Was thinking I needed a little break from all the pressure. Bought a bottle of juice. Was gone about twenty minutes. I started to freak out. Rushed back. You were still there, dead. Thirty-five minutes in, no breath, no pulse—you looked komfy with Death.

I sat in the living room, thinking what I should do next.

Then I heard a noise that freaked me out—like a zombie in my bathroom. Looked up just as you walked into the hall, fixing your kollar and hair as you passed the mirror. In your head, you thought you'd fallen asleep and woke up—no. You had fucking died and then woke up!

I sat there, chin on the floor. Stunned as you walked through the living room door.

Your first words? 'I need a hit. I don't feel very well.'

The first bit of sense I'd seen or heard in forty-five minutes!"

|||Thump—I am still in shock. Ten years later—Thump|||

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

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Yes, I get it—she kouldn't have been checking me out thoroughly. There must have been a very faint heartbeat, or surely that would've been the real thing. A full-time Death—not one of my anomalies.

It was weird—to be told that you were lying in the bathroom and you were dead for 45 minutes. I feel like I shouldn't be here at all. I feel like I am the anomaly, not Death.

Remember what I am telling you though—there is fuck all. A void.

It doesn't quite make sense. Not in this world we know. But somewhere there are answers to this whole mess. Somewhere. I believe in the impossible bekause I am the impossible.

It's so easy to believe what you have lived and died.

✯✯✯

Death Ten

Abjekt Honesty 10.1-1
If you lie down, you will not be at peace.
When you die, your sleep will be sweet.
Not before.
Repeat mistakes and one day you will learn,
it may be far off,
but when it arrives, it shall be earned.

Soundtrack: The The – *Giant*
"I'm thinking of things I'd hoped to forget,
I'm choking to Death in a sun that never sets,
I clogged up my mind with perpetual greed,
and turned all of my friends into enemies,
and now the past has returned to haunt me,
I'm scared of God and scared of hell,
and I'm caving in upon myself."

AnnoDomini[atrix]2020-23

I damaged my back severely at Loch Venachar, Scotland—early summer, 2020.

Was also back on a shitload of methadone. My latest girlfriend (last one) and I were enjoying a packed lunch in a wicker basket. Tea kups, tartan blankets and all the rest of the piknik material required. It was a beautiful day. Everything was perfekt. Scottish lochs are sublime.

The mountains were reaching for God.

The wholly still waters—God's bath—reflekting those mountains, which still reached

The trees.

The hawks.

The rodents.

The me—a disgrace to rodents everywhere.

If I were a mountain—I'd be kissing my own arse, not reaching for God.

If I were a Scottish loch—I'd be filled with blood not bathing God.

If I were a tree—I'd rather be a me.

If I were a hawk—I'd peck out your eyes.

If I were a rodent—I'd stuff myself in some bastard's kitchen, gnawing krumbs like penance.

God wasn't reaching back. The idyll was insidious. Everything was inverted.

We had tender little moments I don't really know how to deal with too well. I kissed her awkward little mouth. Then I walked to the water's edge. So kalm and unsettling. Why unsettling? I was in a relationship for the sake of having kompany. I didn't love her. I don't suppose she loved me either. There was an invisible tension between us. Diffikult to navigate. The beauty of the loch drew me in. Then I picked up a stone and wanted to skim it forever. I threw it and felt a ping in my back. At that stage, just a ping. Everything then went very black, very quickly. Pain from another place. I skreamed out. She kame over. I told her to get the kamping van and take me home—the beauty of the loch never looked fucking uglier.

My kountry. My God. My existence—nothing was ever worse.

Beyond normal pain, into the unknown.

Three or four days of sheer agony followed. I was trying to take the dog for a walk. Trying. Failing. Gut-wrenching futility. Exkruciating. The horror was ridikulous. I kouldn't walk properly. Three or four days brewed in hell by the devil's premo-kook.

The little dog kame to me. Such sad eyes, looking at me like I had been shot and was dying.

Made me wonder—*Are dogs konscious of pain?*

A drug addikt who kouldn't look after her—trapped in that annihilating dysfunktion only addikts know—gave her to me. Of kourse I kould look after a little dog. I shouldn't have akcepted her bekause she looked kool, and black of kourse. She bekame part of my [non]family unit. I changed her name to the last dog I owned—Rabbit.

Ask me why and I'll give you Abjekt Honesty—I was stuck, wanted to go back a few years, another chance with the only love I'd ever valued. This was not a love I valued. But the little dog? She was still kool. Rabbit Version 2 and I were over the park. I had klimbers walking sticks. She found a tennis ball and was asking me to throw it with her pleading puppy eyes. I'm a sucker for puppy eyes. But the little bastard wouldn't leave me alone. I kouldn't walk, never mind launch a tennis ball.

I fell down in a heap of devastation.

Had to phone this new girlfriend (version—fuck knows). She was at home—which wasn't far—and drove over to the park karpark in our kamping-van. She wouldn't kome onto the grass and pick me up. I kouldn't move six inches in any direktion. Eventually had to kall her from 30 meters away: "You're gonna have to drive over the grass and pick me up. You won't get into trouble. If the kouncil do anything, I will use doktor's evidence to ensure your driving licence is as klean as I will never be."

Eventually she kame over and helped me into the back of the van. I liked it there. Everything was okay despite the obvious pain. Back at the house, she helped me in. We were staring at each other, with jaws dropped like we were in a bus line, one millisekond before assassination by mafia hoods from the 30s.

Kouldn't even get off my arse to fill myself with wonderful drugs. Bastard.

Then I was bursting for the toilet but I kouldn't pee. What the fuck?

I was beginning to worry that it was far more dangerous territory than jail, violence, witches or riots. It was an horrendous situation to find myself in. But it was reality. A reality that I hadn't brought on myself right enough. I felt ripped off.

Two doktors kame out. Why two? Fear.

Fear

Abjekt Honesty 10.1-2
Even though I walk through the lightest valley,
I will fear no goodness.
Pops is with me;
his fangs and his manner,
they komfort me.

Soundtrack: John Cale – *Fear is a Man's Best Friend*
"Fear is a man's best friend,
you add it up, it brings you down."

I'm not good with fear. I need it though.

I fear being what I was—a vile, broken, trembling, drug-addikted kriminal.

I fear the end of everything—an Amanita Muscaria on the horizon; the mushroom kloud bleeding white light throughout a red sky.

I fear being happy—wish I hadn't written that—Abjekt Honesty though.

I fear being happy—never been happy.

I fear being told "No!" When there are possible ways to make it yes.

I fear not being human—after trying so hard to be one of you people.

I fear love. I don't fear hate. But I do fear love.

When love is never enough, fear fills organs instead.

And even though I hate me—I do respekt me.

I fear *(like nothing else)* I might murder the beauty I have left.

I know I have beautiful things inside.

What if they emerge from my self-interrogated soul and die?

Like every[thing]one else.

What if it isn't fear at all?

But love in a suit of razor-sharp daggers.

What if I'm not even the human I tore my hands to be?

But a bleeding puppet playing at writing for a dead audience.

I might be dead already,

bled to Death in a forg[r]otten future.

Has this broken mind you're reading died centuries ago?

Is what I'm writing my own illusion?

Do these words dance around the page on a stage of another age?

My heart akhes.

Hollowed out on a dissekting table with a blunt penknife.

Each beat unveils nothing but yet another fear of the next beat.

My heart grates against a rib kage, self-engineered into a jail cell long ago. Dank, dekrepit and dense.

Am I already kondemned?

What if nothing is everything?

And everything is already dead?

[[[**Real fear keeps me up at night**]]]

Abjekt FEAR—

Pure —

Klear**.**

FEAR *is* a human right.

I know it is strange for publik funds to be spent for two doktors on one invalid, based on fear alone. But take into konsideration that the last time the police tried to take me away, I fought six of them and ended up charged with four police assaults. Had to take every charge through trial and be found not guilty for all four of them. All expenses on the taxpayer. Police and doktors kommunikate. They instigate fear through cheap gossip. So, two doktors were very normal for a man who manipulated more doktors than police, addikts, businesses, girlfriends and every other human being that your browser gives you back.

Dr K (almost a Kafka kharakter but fakt) was very koncerned. I was wondering what his plan was. He chatted to his sidekick in the korner and kame over to me. Then he spat out the terrible words: "You will need to go to hospital and get a lifesaving operation. You have *Cauda Equina* (Horses tail) *Syndrome*, and you won't last two days without the operation to lift a prolapsed disk off the nerves at the bottom of your spine."

How did I feel?

Not skared of Death. But in enough pain that I kame around very quickly. I ended up in an ambulance to Edinburgh. They made a hole through my spine, lifted the disk back up and put it into place. They apparently did a great job. I only have a little sliver of skar on my spine. They left what is kalled *a window*, in kase they need to get back in. That was all well and good, but I didn't really know until I woke up.

It made a change from waking up after dying.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

☆☆☆

Even now, I struggle to komprehend the pain I felt. A solid 11/10.

The only time I was ever in pain for something that wasn't my own fault. After the amount of krimes I had kommited. The amount of girlfriends lives I had ruined. The amount of times I had been ressurekted. The amount of people I had simply walked through. The hundreds of thousands of pounds I had stuck in my veins. The way I treated life like a game—yes, I deserved it.

Scotland's drug Deaths for 2020: 1339

☆☆☆

Sat in my bed after the operation, I noticed a little box with a button on it. I knew deep down what it was—fentanyl. Preskription distinktion opioids. Imagine Pops sitting in a hospital being fed with blood donations konstantly. Beautiful nurses bringing him little bags of blood every ten minutes, and Pops then tearing into it with his kute-little fangs. This was my version—I had the best heroin in Edinburgh, and it kame straight from the powers that are. And the powers that are kouldn't do anything about it. It *is* a Human Right to not be in horrendous pain. In this kountry at least. So, I ripped the arsehole out of my little button and got wasted, lying in my hospital bed.

Then, horror: "Nurse! Nurse! My wee button isn't working anymore!"

Of kourse it wasn't working. I had konsumed all the opioids and wanted more. The nurse asked the one in charge and they agreed to give me more. She finally kame back and refilled my pain meds.

One hour later: "Nurse! Nurse! My fucking wee gadget has run out again!"

"Oh, kome on! You kan't go through two kontainers of fentanyl and expekt another one surely."

"Of kourse I want another one, *for fuck's sake*, I am in horrendous pain and you guys give me the button—so fill it again please!" She skuttled off then kame back with more gold. I got uber-wasted again.

Another hour passed: "Nurse! My wee gadget is done again! Fill her up please!"

"Eh! What are you doing with the stuff? I will ask my boss, but she wasn't impressed when I asked her just over an hour ago."

She looked at me like I'd stolen her mother's kat.

"If she doesn't fill it up, I will get a lawyer. Seriously."

I looked back at her like I'd just eaten the kat.

More fentanyl was delivered 10 minutes later. I had to promise that would be my last one. The boss nurse even made a point of sending the hospital's drug dependency team to my bed. But I was sleeping by then. I only know bekause the latest girlfriend told me. Then I was sent home. I went straight to my doktor and konned him into giving me eight valium tablets per day. It was now, very much, my human right to be high non-stop. Thought I'd won a watch at a hook-a-duck fairground stall if I'm honest.

I blanked my girlfriend and her child. Sat watching live war on the PC in the kitchen. When she kame in to make her child food, I pissed off to the room or lay all over the table with my arms totally outstretched. I wasn't using as heavily, but I was still hooked and took on a valium addiktion like it was my birthright. Yet another pill on a pile stacked to the ceiling. I was high for about a year, like a sublime heavenly boat-ride. Every drug known to man was swimming and twisting through that deranged bloodstream of mine.

I got higher and higher, my body a kaleidoskope of sound and kolour.

Pops phoned me one night to ask why I was floating around the bedroom at nights. All jealous bekause he thought I had been turned by another vampire.

Had to assure him: “No Pops, I am just high forever. My version of being you I suppose. Okay Pops, you have a nice night drinking the blood stuff, I will kontinue on my valium boat ride down this bath of blue lullabies and inkandescent dekay. Bye!”

“It will end in tears young man. Blood, insomnia and Abjekt Pain. At least my addiktion is pure sunlight. These are man-made khemikals. You will end up dead in some shithole and I won’t even be able to feed off you.”

“Nah. It is great. Promise!”

I always believed I knew best. If I kould have seen what would kome—the redundance of extremity—maybe I’d have died then. But I wouldn’t even listen to my alter-fucking-ego.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

Aktions like those destroyed me. Tore my soul in two and threw it into a Klass A fire.

It probably kame from dekades of putting everything into nothing. Addiktion is like a kompulsive liar’s monologue for all eternity. Your own voice telling you: “This time it will be different.”

I was running out of time but was still listening to the world-klass liar that is me.

☆☆☆

The Abjekt Death of Sleep

Abjekt Honesty 10.1-3
As a servant of Pops,
I kondemn myself in every way.
By grim endurance,
through addiktions, hardships, katastrophes, beautiful beatings,
interesting imprisonments, fun riots and hard labours.
Sleepless nights are [un]graced by thunder.
A pain I found, beyond wonder.
I sank deeper,
pulled apart asunder.

Soundtrack: The Psychotic Monks – *Decors*
"But it was too late to realise this was a disease,
too late to realise this is my disease,
I can't stand my body, I can't feel my body"

AnnoDomini[atrix]2021

I was at a Pavement gig in Edinburgh. The gig was great. I was as high as, well—me I suppose. Something strange okkurred—I was no longer high. Was wondering why but I kouldn't work it out. By this time, I was pretty much inkapable of figuring out what day of the week it was. I was only at the gig bekause a friend had eskorted me.

Then I felt terrible, and I wanted to go home, in the middle of a Pavement gig. I'd never seen them live before and was really enjoying it until I wasn't. I did go home and then I kouldn't sleep. *What the fuck is wrong with me?* I asked myself all night. The next day, I took all the substances preskribed, plus extras. Was hoping they would knock me silly as I hadn't slept. They didn't. Even Pops sleeps! Why kouldn't I? It was like I had been defeated. I didn't enjoy that feeling at all. I went to my doktor and told him straight: "I'm in withdrawals! Yet I am still taking *all* of the drugs you give me!"

He said sorry and he didn't have a klue.

This dragged on, over and over, like a dog chewing gravel. So, I'll be straight with you—I knew he was lying the first minute I saw him. Unless a person is a world-klass liar like I am—it is a waste of time trying to run deception through my gravel. It krumbles fast, every time. I did my research and finally found a kondition: *Tolerance Withdrawal.* It happens when a person's brain gets so used to valium that the receptors shut up shop and throw it off. No matter how many are taken—the brain isn't interested but the body is hooked.

My body kraved. My brain dissociated.

My body was elektrik. My brain blew fuses.

My body needed truth. My brain fed nothing but lies.

My body was in pain. My brain spewed acid rain.

My body wished it was in A&E. My brain receptors attended a yearlong funeral.

My body began shutting down. My brain was a firestorm.

My body bekame a nuklear winter.

My brain was dried out and flat—like a toad left on a bible in the sun.

God didn't raise an eyebrow, just watched—or didn't—only God knows. Or maybe God's a better bullshitter than me. I wish I knew. Then I'd own my awful soul. God made sure I endured pain. This wasn't even Death—at least Death resurrekts. The preskription said *40mg per day*. My inner voice told me—*if it is a tolerance problem, then just up the dose until you feel better.* On some days, I was swallowing 500mg minimum. Nobody takes that much valium on top of methadone, heroin, krack, ekstasy, weed, whatever else—and lives. It's extremely diffikult to overdose on valium—any benzo really. But mix it with opiates and it bekomes easy. That's the very specifik reason I live in a kountry with the highest drug Deaths in Europe.

The truth? Dekades before, when I first started on methadone, 20mg would make me sleep while standing up and drop joints all over people's karpets. As the years went on, methadone bekame a

stabiliser. Drugs were added like spending freaks add kredit kards to their wallets. My wallet got fatter and fatter. My spending went beyond what my akkounts had akcess too. My every bank went into administration. I had reached insolvency of substances. And I wasn't only taking that amount to get high for half an hour—I was also feeling the withdrawals from that amount. Ugly. Vicious. I wanted to kick it in the teeth, but they were my teeth. I was stuck.

The valium illness dragged on. I kouldn't sleep longer than an hour at a time for two fucking years. God didn't kare, probably thought—*I'll teach this bastard; one way or other.* I was dead inside, living on the edge of annihilation. It was dreadful. I suffered through most of it living in a no-frills-little-pigeon-pad, in her hometown of Alloa. A little block of four new houses with a shitty garden, filled with plastik dinosaurs, chutes and cheap deckchairs. Inside the house smelled sickly new, even though it was years old. Every time anyone kame in to visit, I kould smell everything sprayed on them, kould almost taste what they had eaten for lunch. All my nerves, all of my senses, and all of my thinking were flipped upside down. I tried everything—even stopping dead around that ridikulous amount, despite a doktor telling me not to.

Lasted about two weeks and had to start back up bekause her little daughter lived in the house too. A person in the state I was in shouldn't ever be around children. Little kids need stability. At least the old me would sleep anywhere—and did so every day. I kouldn't be stable at all.

It wasn't only the lack of sleep, I was also ill with anxiety.

No, that isn't right. It wasn't as easy to deskribe as simple anxiety.

Every day was like my penultimate day on earth.

Was more ill than I'd ever been before. The overwhelming dread of the end sat in my gut. Heartbreak. Stress. Lack of sleep.

Pain in my bones—like miners bringing them down with thermite.

Lack of koncentration.

I kouldn't even read a newspaper.

Hatred. Despair. Anguish.

The longing for normality I knew was far out of reach.

All of it blurred together—inside my anti-reality.

Every day of my fucking life.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

One hour sleep maximum every night for two fucking years...

A police cell packed to bursting inside my head for two fucking years...

An armed robbery of my sanity for two fucking years...

Bone marrow skraped out with a rusted razor blade for two fucking years...

Nothing left to say except Scotland's drug Deaths were 1330 for 2021 and 1051 during 2022.

☆☆☆

We went to an Asian Island on holiday at the beginning of 2023. It was a horrible little break, more like a soul break. Her mother and father were both there. We had to sleep in the same room as her little boy and kouldn't have sex. Not that I was all that able, even if we kould. Being ill due to synthetik khemikals is a bastard of a konsequence. I still wasn't sleeping that well, maybe two hours each night. Had tapered the huge mountains of valium down to a kouple of tablets.

Her mother was twisted and hated me. She despised me as much, if not more, than I hated her. It was not meant to be in any way. She knew that and konstantly told her prized possession that she should chuck me out. I suppose it was lucky, for me, that I slept so much when we first got together. I'd probably have seen more of her mother. Let me be klear about my sleeping habit—it was sometimes handy when I was asleep—I didn't have to get to know people I'd rather not know.

And I missed sleeping—for, yes, you guessed it—two fucking years!

Only back in December, I had gone to the little boy's birthday party when I was buckled on a multitude of drugs. I didn't want to be, I had to be by then.

Her mother kouldn't stand me so much, I had to pay for my flights and board myself, when she was paying for her daughter and grandson. The truth is—I would normally have paid for my girlfriend and her son, and it felt like I was being squeezed out of an apparent family okkasion.

Now that I am far removed from that dark holiday, I kan see why I shouldn't have gone. I spent my time smoking weed in a town that I kan't remember the name of. The dude who ran the shop was alright though. We got to know one another very well bekause I was in there so much. While the rest of the *family* were sat under the sun at the hotel swimming pools, I was sat with him in klouds of weed smoke. We'd make up new bongs and buckets from all the old pipes and related shit in his shop.

I did go to see dolphins with my girlfriend and her child. Dropped her kamera in the sea when I was taking a pikture of the wake behind the boat we were on. She was disgusted. By that time, I knew it was over, and I didn't kare.

We got home. Then I was horsed out and bekame homeless.

Slept in the spare room of a friend's business premises for a month and was then put into emergency akkommodation. Only had a mikrowave on top of my bedroom drawers to kook all food in. That shit was dark in the extreme.

I bekame a mikro-meals expert.

I was so ill.

I was then charged by the police for emotional abuse. No exkuses. Fakts: She threw me out bekause I was a wreck. Fine. What wasn't fine was her keeping everything. I'd send her messages—telling her I still loved her, telling her this and that. It went on for a month.

Then one day, walking through that awful little town she's from, I saw her with her mother in a pub, enjoying lunch. I walked straight to their table. Looked at her mother and said: "You are known as a poisoned dwarf. Poisoned dwarfs have no friends. Know who told me that? Her!"

I pointed at my ex.

She sat there in utter shock.

Yes, I was out of order. But I wanted something from that wreck of a relationship. Anything. Even if it was just to feel better for a minute. They went to the police. I was arrested and charged. That was fine, I kould live with that. Harder to take was being held overnight in the cells, brought to kourt, and hearing the Fiskal oppose bail. They were going to jail me, for emotional abuse. No. *For fuck's sake*, all I did was say I still loved her bekause I wanted my van back. And yes—I also spat that line at her mother.

My lawyer kame to see me.

"You're gonna have to plead guilty." He said.

I replied:"I know. That's exaktly what I thought."

The judge put me on a social work order.

I've told you before: there's very little I regret. As psykhopathik as it is or not. No bullshit. Do I regret kalling her mother a poisoned dwarf? One word—no.

What I regret is using "I love you," to manipulate her into giving me half of the £8000. Especially when my manipulation had been done to Death. What used to be a [sk]ill in my eyes, was now a fucking liability.

I should have gone legal, done it properly.

But I was inkapable.

I kreated the mess.

It aktually turned out okay. I'm good at inverting negatives into positives. The work I did with the social worker will make me a better person. She was really nice. Having to do work to make myself a better person doesn't bother me at all. What bothers me is that I'll always have that on my rekord—a krime I didn't kommit but pled guilty to. A change, I suppose, from all the krimes I did kommit and walked free of.

Reality.

You spend your life fucking reality in the arse, and when you're too ill to fuck it properly, it fucks you back. Only, there is far more pain when it fucks you back.

The kouncil eventually gave me a house. I was so far gone that I wrecked the Goddamned thing. My sister was trying to help me. But I kouldn't be helped. Got new drugs from the doktor to fight off the end of the valium withdrawals, and they even made me sleep!

Hellelujah for me.

Sleep. Beautiful sleep.

Was in the kitchen one night, absolutely destroyed.

Obliterated.

I remember a krack and a silver flash—I had fallen asleep standing up and broke my head on the tiled wall. I still have both the bump and skar above my left eye.

Years after.

I was taking too many drugs.

That meant, me, as someone who does not give a fuck, would sit down wherever I was and have a quick nap—next to a roundabout. The filthy British police found me and tried to take me to hospital. I remember them koming and waking me up, almost pleading.

I told them I wouldn't go with them, to go away.

They did.

Then they woke me up again.

Half an hour later.

I was on the path at the other side of the same roundabout, sleeping some more. Told them to piss off again. They did. I remember leaving them but I don't remember walking home.

Due to eating nothing but drugs.

Due to the pressure on my body from not sleeping for two (fucking) years.

Due to falling on my way into that little shithole flat.

Due to *losing* my preskription, getting another one, taking the entire lot:

Death klocked in. Sat its arse down at my komputer without an interview.

I slipped out of my body like a jacket potato dripping in buttery sin.

Gone.

At long last.

|||Thump—Like a dream exhumed and re-threaded into reality—Thump|||

The police found me, resuscitated me and packed me off in an ambulance. They took me to the hospital. When I kame around, I walked out with a 14-mile-walk-home. Not a penny in my pocket.

No phone.

No heart.

I rekall thinking: *I will never go back to that horrible hospital!*

As if we have a choice when it komes to hospital, like it's a dodgy hotel you kan leave a bad review of online. Then the police found me again and took me to the exakt place that I didn't want to be.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

☆☆☆

I was an absolute wreck. The emergency services were all over town looking for me. In and out of hospital so many times that I kan't give you a number. Everyone was sick of me. People thought they were too good to talk to an arsehole like me. There were no longer beautiful women wrapped around me. I was alone, in every sense.

Well, I had heroin, I suppose.

It's not the withdrawals. It's not the life I had to live. It's not the people I had to know. It's not even the drug that's the liar—it's the psykhologikal addiktion: my voice in my head. It soothed me, kalmed me down. Then it made that promise that I wanted to believe more than anything: *You are you. You are not a fucking drug addikt. You are better than that. Look at what you have done despite unfathomable odds against. You will beat this.*

My mind, memory, feelings, life, self-esteem. Everything was a lying bastard. Everyone was a lying bastard. I lied to myself, under a strikt no-honesty policy.

I was the biggest lying bastard of all.

The world champion lying bastard.

I kondemn myself, every minute of every night. I am so used to kondemnation that I kan do it while sleeping, while laughing, while reading, while eating.

☆☆☆

The woman in charge of addiktion services at the hospital decided to put me in an induced koma. They used huge amounts of ketamine—no less—to put me to sleep.

If I wasn't sleeping, I was tripping to the max.

My sister, whose name I kould not remember, was sat at my hospital bed. I was on my hands, knees and hospital pants, pulling wheelies and doing bunny hops all over the rubber surface of a bed. Did I know who I was? No. They kept asking me and I kept telling them I didn't know.

"Name?"

"Don't know. Kannot remember."

"Age?"

"Don't know."

"Whereabouts?"

"Looks like a fucking hospital. I don't know."

I believed one of the male nurses was a French international football player. Wearing the full strip and football boots in a hospital ward.

Another nurse, I thought was an angel.

He was giving me drugs after all.

There was so much going on. Busy hospital.

I didn't understand what was real and what was not anymore.

Weeks of fragmented, surreal, and totally overwhelming head-khaos.

One month later, I was still in hospital. Koming down from the ketamine head-wreck. Sitting up in bed one night. As far as I kould see, living through the residue of my fuzzed-up brain—the nurse in charge was baking in the ward. All those lovely smells were konsumed by my beak. I was watching the oven intently, thinking I deserved some of the baked food.

Eventually all the other nurses were gone. I sat mesmerised, watching her bake bread and kakes. Wondering why she would do such a thing in a hospital ward. *Must be kos she knows she'll get away with it—I* remember thinking.

With that in mind, I began to walk over. I reckoned I had earned a loaf of that bread, thanks to my firmly zipped mouth. Two nurses brought down my flight from bed to bakery.

"Hey! Where are you going?" One asked, as they both stood on my runway. My passengers were hungry; they needed to get out the way and let the plane take off.

"I am heading over to pick up a loaf of that bread. Maybe some of the kakes too." Only, there was no bread. No oven. No kakes. They told me to get back to my bed.

Ketamine kome down I suppose.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation.

☆☆☆

Oh well, maybe I will get to that loaf of bread next time. Or maybe it will get me. Fucking ketamine. It says a lot that they had to put me in a koma to hold me down. If they didn't, they knew I would go back out and die.

I was speaking to a friend at xmas, 2025. He works in kriminal justice. I told him that I had been writing a book about every time my heart has stopped. He told me straight: "There is more that you kan't remember. I know bekause I saw it. You have died more times than you know, and you are still here. You are here for a reason."

That skares me. I don't see myself as anything but a waste of skin and bones. A perverse anomaly of sanktimonious anti-servitude. A mockery of mortality.

Drug Deaths in Scotland for the year 2023 was 1172.

Yes, I agree—it should have been 1173.

☆☆☆

My Special Death

Abjekt Honesty 11.1-1
Bekause you are a kriminal in my eyes,
and dishonoured,
I love you.
I give the world in return for you to kome back,
just one more time.
You must make this one special.
The end to beat all ends.

Soundtrack: Lo Fidelity Allstars – *Blisters on My Brain*
"Never mind your fingers,
I got blisters on my brain,
to increase the chances of going insane."

AnnoDomini[atrix]2023-2024

People packed me off on a train from Alloa to somewhere else. I remember them getting rid of me like I was a verruka and the train was a khiropodist. There are no other memories of the journey. No memories of arriving. No memories of meeting the people I was going to be living with. As soon my head was straightened after waking up the next day, I realised I was stuck in rehab and was about to kome off methadone and valium yet again. One of the men I shared a house with told me I was in Seaham, a beautiful seaside town between Sunderland and Newcastle with a rich mining history. I remember thinking of the parallels between sticking things in the ground looking for the earth's blood and me sticking needles in my arm for my blood. The difference was that they did it as a job, I pretended to myself it was my human right. I was now at a point where I decided to put 100% effort in. Hadn't put that enormity into anything before. Well, nothing except fighting and dying. I had to deal with a room full of drug addikts every day of my fucking life, and my fucking *life* was not good—despised the place, but I had to make it work. I didn't like most of the men and was told, rather firmly, to keep my dick where it lives at nights.

No her. No she. No girlfriend whatsoever.

I had to share a house with fellow drug addikts. It soon taught me I wasn't as bad as I thought. Our living room was always filled with the lokal two housemate's friends, who weren't my friends. The thieving bastards did my head in. I did a lot of komplaining at first, then bought some designer klothes, a new turntable and some kool, obskure and disturbed musik to play. Then I simply had to live with the nonsense unfolding outside my bedroom door.

I just watched kalendars—

Oktober: Last dose of Valium (no sleep).
November: Taught about substance dependency (no sleep).
December: Rehab xmas dinner (no sleep but even volunteered to wash the dishes).
January: Off methadone kompletely (no sleep).
February: Little problem here, we will get to that very soon.

While I was koming off those two dastardly substances, the cheeky rehab decided to move lokations from the next street to where I lived to a business park outside the town. I remember thinking—*this is a disgrace! Imagine them being so rude they'd move while I am koming off drugs, fuck's sake.* And then, to top it all off, they expekted me to do what they kalled therapeutik duties while I was in withdrawals. Again—*fuck's sake man, they should do their jobs themselves and let me withdraw in peace.* I had to walk one and a half miles to the rehab every day but weekends, so I kould karry pieces of plasterboard out to the skips over 100 times a day and sit in a klassroom for a kouple of hours. 2023 had died and it was the kold and early months of 2024. Not much fun on the koast in the north of England.

The dose of nerve pain tablets for my back had been dropped by the hospital after I was released in late summer. I'd been buying the damn things online the entire time since. If I didn't, I was in tremendous pain—on top of withdrawals—from the two worst substances to kome off. Eventually,

I kouldn't find an online nerve pain eskape, had bought so much that their stock had bekome depleted beyond rekognition. My back was getting sorer and sorer. I was hardly sleeping at all. I was getting hornier and hornier. One thing kould solve all those problems at once—medicine. To stick with Abjekt Honesty, know this: a drug addikt will use the *hornier and hornier* angle here. We lie to ourselves to such an extent that we believe we are doing the right thing. We justify our next decision by saying: "They told me to stay away from women. I was horny. That's why I took drugs. I was trying to do the right thing." Nah. Not on.

I've always used a simple enough system when I am in a city I don't know—go straight to a beggar. Tell them what I need, wait and see if they kould get it. If they kould, offer to buy them some too—as long as they were willing to take me and introduce me to the drug dealer. I've done it in every city in Britain and Ireland. When times were hard, beggars were little drug finders, far better equipped than witchfinders to find what they were looking for. Although they were skouring shitholes for heroin and not heresy. They are like high funktioning drug detektors with dirty klothes, a raised palm and objektifying eyes—instead of a plastik handle, two-foot of tubed steel and a sensor. I found a drug finder general in the centre of Sunderland, sat like he was begging for a high-five. We embarked on an epik journey to find the salvation I required. He was happy enough to be receiving drugs instead of kash. We went to a dodgy area of the city and bumped into his girlfriend on the bus. I kleaned the dealer out of the tablets I needed once we got to the house. As I was treating it like a big adventure for drugs, I thought I would go all in and bought some krack and valium too.

Some people might kall that a *relapse*.

Abjekt Honesty? I've never been off drugs long enough to relapse.

I rekall standing at a bus stop with the drug finder general and his female kompanion. We were under the shelter smoking a krack pipe. It is all distorted inside my head, but I do remember being fucked up. Laughing. Joking. Teeth like rows of half destroyed, kondemned housing. Cheap klothing labels. Shoes with holes. Lighters flicking. Kackling laughter. Kars passing. Eyeballs. I was swirling around. Kar headlights. Engine noise. Every kolour imaginable. Vapour trails. More kackling. Looking to the left, stepping off the bus-stop kerb. I turned to the right...

Smash.

Fourteen tonnes of steel in my face. A red and silver flash.

I do have a very, very slight memory of hearing lots of kracks inside my head.

Lights went out.

My soul bounced off the road before my head did. Death didn't just visit—it moved in. Thought it kould just stay fulltime. Took the good towels. Set up shop. Even hired a milkman and a pensioner to sell drink to the underage mob. Death is as manipulative as me. Worse, maybe. My pulse slipped between our world and somewhere else on that road, it fucked off to Peter Pan world before they kaptured the thing. The people who were trying to save me had to steal pirate boats to get back with it safely. Then I flatlined again. Had my heart hotwired by emergency services with

their little box of pads and tricks. Thieved from Death's new kar's back seat. Death felt ripped off and kame after me again. They picked me up and bolted with their precious kargo. Death pulled the handbrake of its kar and krashed into a hedge. They ran faster, karrying me into the bus like I was smuggled drugs inside a koffin. The border sekurity guards of Death's domain chasing them, attempting to issue arrest warrants.

I sat upright, apparently—but two minutes later, was gone again.

In the hospital, they injekted me with temporary existence for five minutes.

Then Death kame back and took me back to the underworld.

They injekted me again.

A tug-of-war between overworked mortals and big bad Death.

I kan only imagine what I would have thought if I were one of the nurses or doktors:

What the aktual fuck do we have here?

Then: "He's back in kardiak arrest."

It was almost as if Death had ticked my soul out to any and every junkie with a hand, until they got their benefits. No interest. Just a wink and wry smile. A double decker bus, travelling at 30mph, is very likely to break a face. It did—it broke my jaw; it broke my cheekbone; it broke my eye-socket; it broke my nose; and finally, it gave me three brain skars. My poor brain bled like it had been thrown to a vampire party Pops and his pals were having and they all took a bite. It split the skin under my lower eyelids—like they were fucking tangerines. If something heavy hits a person square in the face, it kan tear the lower eyelids open. Fourteen tonnes was heavy enough to do so.

I've a skar under each eye kreeping down the sides of my nose, a skar on the right side of my face, and a skar under my right nostril.

It killed me six times. Six that I know of.

That was My Special Death—six for the price of one.

A fucking bargain!

Hellelujah Morcelsis! Hellelujah Morcelsis! Hellelujah Morcelsis!

A kulmination of dekades of hard work.

Extreme attention to detail—perfektion in Death.

A beautiful, monstrous Death.

I am a star of Death.

I shine brighter than every life.

A Death of double-decker bus proportions was achieved.

A Perfekt ten.

Thank-you people! I'd like to thank Pops for always being with me.

If I was an Olympik dying champion, this would have been the Death where all the judges and audience fawned over me. They would pin medals on me, hand me a bottle of alkohol-friendly *Lo-Life*, drape a necklace of black roses round my neck.

I've told you before: Death is fluid for me. It kills people—I know. After my Special Death however, I fell in love with the only definite in this shitty world. I see the logik in it now. I respekt it, I love it—but only now, after so many ends. If you got to know Death as well as you knew life, wouldn't you? I've heard a lot of people say: "I love life!"

I've never heard a single one say: "I love Death!" I have a strong affektion for the unwanted, the alienated and the ignored.

It should have taken me full-time. Didn't I deserve it? But no, it didn't.

My sister told me I walked out of the hospital on the same day, hours—not days—later. I totally disregarded my injuries, got up and walked out. Dead but awake. The hospital people wanted to kage me like a lifer. You remember pikture memory number one from the Moriword? The nurse telling me my heart had stopped six-times and putting a morphine shot in my arm? What I didn't tell you was that I remember rolling my eyes and replying: "Yes, whatever. Where's ma fucking shoes?" That question damned me as it showed mental kapacity and they kouldn't keep me.

I'd stolen my life back but was not aware of anything.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

What kind of monster had the hospital resurrekted?

No kind of monster. It was over two dekades since I'd been kalled Satan in Hell. Twenty years of living, dying, drugs, vampires, girlfriends I won't name, gangsters I kan't name; ghosts and names I forgot.

This is no fantasy. It is so real it pulverises and shreds my soul.

I wish it were as easy as hiding behind monster status—skaring everyone away. That is what my gut tells me to do. I kould do that if I wanted. But this is no longer as basik as want. I kall it My Special Death bekause it damaged my brain in a way medikal science struggles to understand.

It turned me from monstrous to gracious in half an hour.

☆☆☆

For six weeks, I was kicked out of the hospital and readmitted. I kan remember other pikture memories but that is all for 56 days.

In an A+E department.

|||Void|||

The inside of an ambulance.

|||Void|||

In my toilet with a needle in my arm and blood up the walls. My bath was filled with bloody water.

|||Void|||

A drug dealer's black front door when the sun was koming up. It was kold. I kould see my breath.

|||Void|||

I had locked myself out of my house and there was blood all over the royal blue front door.

|||Void|||

Another drug addikt I know saying: "You're a disgrace to junkies."

|||Void|||

Junkie isn't a word I use unless I am deskribing myself. I don't allow others to use it to deskribe me. I kan't remember if I snapped or not bekause my memory is absent, but I do agree. I was. No, I was worse. Much worse than a junkie. I guess I got back home from England alright—I'm here after all. I know how to use train and bus kompanies in that ridikulous manipulation game of mine—how to get a free ride home. I kan't remember any of it. What I do know, but do not fully understand, is that it shouldn't have happened. I should not be alive, never mind better than before. My memory of it all is left on some filthy road. I was almost dead but still living, talking and walking. I was also back using signifikant amounts of drugs.

Dissociative Fugue State—a rare kondition where a person suddenly loses their identity and wanders, unaware they've forgotten their past. It's triggered by trauma or stress, and when it ends, they often don't remember what happened. Today's information systems and receipts kame in handy. I'd been using social media, shopping for expensive klothes and food, even staying in hotels. But I kan't remember any of it—just the *pikture memories.*

My sister told me she kaught me shooting up in the hospital toilet. Overdosed again. Once they revived me, they kicked me out. During a meeting with a social worker, I turned blue. She told me, afterwards, that I was as high as a kite—talking one minute, then my head smashed off the desk the next. I've no idea how many times I died. Their defibrillators must have needed a charge after hotwiring my heart all those times. I know I drank a full bottle of Morphine—it's on my hospital rekords.

Koherence krept back around March.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

✯✯✯

How does someone like me hand out hope like it's a little piece of God in your hands? How does the hopeless deal out Klass A Hope? How do I alkhemise the hell I just dragged you through?

I think I remember how to hope. Although hope doesn't kome to me straight. It's wonky, dark and korrupted—like a holy imposter who forgets your name but kounts your sins on beads.

Why shouldn't this khaos give you hope? I am still here. Nobody knows how bad it got. Nobody will ever know what I put myself through fully. Nobody will ever know the true extent of the damage I did to myself and others.

Nobody but me.

Hope flickers in the dungeon we murder meaning inside.

✯✯✯

The Abjekt Dungeon

Abjekt Honesty 11.1-2

Pops is patient. Pops is kind. Pops is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude.
Pops does not insist on his own way. He is not irritable or resentful.
Pops does not rejoice in right doing but rejoices in pain.
Pops bears all things. Pops respekts most things, hopes all things that make any sense.
Pops endures darkness.
Pops Burns in flames at the koffin door.
Vampires watch and it gives them hope.
Pops is a martyr of his own demise.
Pops is pure.

Soundtrack: Depeche Mode – *One Caress*
"I have to believe that sin,
can make a better man,
well, it's the mood that I am in,
that's left us back where we began."

Klose your eyes and put yourself in that dungeon. The light is off. There is damp konkrete under your arse and hands. You're freezing. A different guard komes in every day and saws another centimetre off your legs. When you're not skreaming, you hear the skreams of others. You want out—but you are not going to get out. It's endless.

Ekhoes))

They stop kutting bekause there's nothing left of your legs to kut. Then a guard komes in, ties your torso to the bed, and tells you that tomorrow they will start on your fingertips and work up each arm. Only now, they shall take off a millimetre each day. It's the worst it's ever been. You feel suicidal for the first time ever. Typikal—you finally want to die and you kan't. You klose your eyes bekause you're shattered, but you kan't sleep. After that—you don't sleep again.

Ekhoes))

Your existence is a cell. Pain paints the walls. Insomnia skratches the door. Skreams stain the air black. You are the silence after the Gods stopped speaking. Every tomorrow is a plague written in your blood. The skreams down the hall bekome the soundtrack to your suffering. You have never imagined anything worse. It pounds you down, unrelenting. On and on and on.

Ekhoes))

Six months later, you're lying on the little bed with your eyes wide open one minute, klosed tight shut the next. Something strange happens—you sleep. When you wake, you kongratulate yourself. Then you hear a whistle—distant, familiar, puzzling. It gets kloser. You know that tune from somewhere. The smell hits you. You know that smell from childhood. It kan't be real.

It is him: "Dad! Look what the bastards have done to my arms and legs! I haven't seen you in so long. Kan you get me out of here please? I want to go home."

He just smiles and says: "I don't understand. Your legs are fine. You've only been sleeping for a night. You're at home. You've had a bad dream. Kalm down."

You know better. You were there.

You kame back damaged, unhinged, wounded—in ways no one will ever komprehend.

You kan't even tell your dad. He wouldn't believe you. He'd say you'd lost the plot.

So you akcept where you are.

It's over. Silence.

That night, you're watching telly with your mum and dad. Adverts kome on—so you go for a piss. Silence. But you still hear the skreams of the others. You probably always will.

Then it hits—you got out. You survived a hell no one knew existed but you.

All those months.

All the pain.

All the skreams.

The truth lands—you endured for a reason beyond just you.

That experience of enduring is what matters.

That is the little piece of God in every hand.

There are people out there who need to know you survived.

No one changes *the* world—but many change *a* world. If we all change *a* world, maybe we change *the* world. Together. Not alone. Your hope is that you're still here despite everything. More than that—you get to hand that hope to someone else who is suffering. The word *hope* originates from Old English *hopian* and *hopa*, with roots in Proto-West Germanic, and has been used to express trust, expektation, and desire since before the 12th century. It is unstable by default. An abstrakt koncept. The only way to give it away is to show the example, kommit to the aktion with trust, konfidence and expektation. Believe in both yourself and what you are doing, people will watch, they will see you are doing and not wasting hope by sitting on your arse hoping. Let's treat hope less as something we possess and more as something we give. If people don't see, then they walk into that dungeon and just sit inside their own suffering.

History repeats. Pops repeats—he runs to the sun knowing it will kill him. Pops burned alive. So did I. Maybe you will too. If that happens, know this—fire sometimes kauterises more than it kills. To be shown and to embrace the example is to embalm pain with purpose. If you've made it out of that dungeon—help someone who hasn't. Someone like me. I've never begged for anything. I will sit my arse down on the street now. I will beg. I will plead.

Use what you shouldn't have survived. Put *the* world in someone's heart. It's all there is.

I know. I tried *everything* else.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

I met a woman in Glasgow the other day. She was obviously drunk. Krying. Pleading. Skreaming in my face. She had a horrifik deformity. I didn't know why she was deformed I just felt sorry for her. I wanted to help if I kould.

Then she skreamed in my face: "I got run over by a fucking bus!"

It hit me harder than any bus kould. Not in the eyes—in my heart.

It taught me so much: I should be grateful for the skars under my eyes. Grateful I wasn't deformed. Grateful I survived. Grateful it happened so many times that I kan't remember and I still walked away.

She had given me hope by proving what I didn't realise—I had that little piece of God in my hands all along—for dekades—I just kouldn't see it. I was too busy exercising my apparent human right to annihilate my soul with drugs.

It also taught me that I'm haunted—I see her at night when I klose my eyes. I wish I was lying.

☆☆☆

Eventually I bekame a mental-health-ward issue. They didn't know what else to do with me. I spent many long days in a hospital garden within the buildings with people who spoke to God, people who spoke to monsters and people who spoke to themselves. After many interesting konversations with these people, something dawned—my brain was different. I had lost a lot of my kognitive processing ability, but I also had something more, something deeper than what I had before. It freaked me out. I was still struggling with artikulation but asked my personal nurse in my normal manner: "Have you ever had a patient who had their head smashed by a 14-tonne bus, felt no pain, and said they had something they didn't before. Like an upgrade?"

She looked at me like I was off my head (very true), then answered: "No. In my six years as a nurse, I've never seen or heard anything like this. You're the only one with a positive experience after having their head smashed in by a bus. What do you mean by no pain?"

I looked back at her as if what was happening was the most normal thing in the world and said: "I know what pain feels like having broken bones multiple times before. About a month in, it's almost as bad as the initial break. Right now—I'm waiting on a pain that doesn't exist. Tell me that's normal and I'll give you a Star Bar."

She looked at me like I'd just murdered her pet hamster and replied: "No Star Bar for me I'm afraid. No pain at all?" Her eyes were kocked, her lips kurled together.

"Such little pain that I walked to the plastik surgery ward earlier, asked them to rebreak and restrukture my face so I kould take advantage of this preemo-period of no pain. The bastards said no!" Found myself making exkuses: "Isn't it logikal to take advantage of a situation like this?"

She nodded in slow-motion, raising her eyebrows in a non-fussed sort of way.

Then I said: "The plastik surgery doktor looked at me like I was in the right place, and said, *'We'll never rebreak your face. Sorry!'*" She told me to kalm down and to stop going to plastik surgery and asking them to rebreak my face.

It's absurd, right? Who gets hit by a double-decker bus, feels no pain and gets more? I asked the mental health ward staff if I kould speak to a person with a spiritual background. They eventually put me in touch with the hospital's chaplain. I asked her many questions, polluting her head with multiple hysterikal theories. She replied: "You survived what should have killed you. That is a mirakle. You shouldn't be here." My mouth was shut for once. I didn't feel like a mirakle, I felt like a black blood stain on the church floor. Then I stood up, said thank you, and walked through a busy hospital of ill and dying people, straight back to my room.

That night I lay in my bed and kried alone for hours.

The mental health ward released me at the beginning of April 2024.

It was as if the world was stuck on pause when I got out. I stayed on the edge of a village with my sister and spent a lot of time walking her dog around my hometown of Tillicoultry. I began going to substance abuse rekovery meetings and listening to stories of self-inflikted torture like my own. Rehabs had planted a seed; they were good for that if nothing else. There were many times when I ventured out and forgot where I was and what I was doing.

An idea manifested over the kourse of my time alone—I wanted to go back to university. I missed learning things, but my brain was damaged and there were reservations. I fought with self-doubt for many long nights. While at the rehab in Seaham, I had written a few poems and one and a half pages of prose. Although my kognitive processing was still misaligned, I just about trusted myself enough to apply to do an MLitt in Kreative Writing at Glasgow University. I kouldn't believe it when they akcepted me. There was nothing but a deep-rooted knowledge that I did not deserve the chance so I should prove to myself, my family, and all the friends who tried to help me that I kould do it.

If I kould pass—I would be happy.

The summer was the longest of my life and I remained alone. I even tried using drugs a few times. Every single time I did, without fail, they didn't do anything to me. I had killed drugs, my life-long propulsive force. Did I grieve drugs? After what I have dragged you through, I am not going to lie to you now. Yes, I grieved drugs more than I ever grieved any person—this is probably the most damning Abjekt Honesty in the entire book. I missed drugs much more than girlfriends, dead family, dead friends and even Wee Frank.

I moved to student akkommodation next to the Botanic Gardens in Glasgow in September 2024. There were many diffikulties initially. I had to teach myself how to write again. It embarrassed me hugely and I did so all alone. I had a few appointments with a psykhologist, most of which were spent on the subjekt of *Impøster Syndrome*. Being part of an ancient edukational institution made me think of the thousands who had kome before me. I felt like I was the most unworthy of those thousands and didn't have a klue what I was doing. Most of the others had been to university the year before and were already fluent in the language, the methods, the expektations—how to think and speak about writing in struktural, stylistik and ethikal terms.

The other students and tutors helped me find my way. In klass they spoke of voice, rhythm, pacing, strukture, restraint. I took it literally: voice was my own voice—how I would tell a story to someone on a street; rhythm became perkussion (words) and bass (emotions); pacing was the breakneck speed of my life and the deeper, slower, soul interrogations; strukture was how I would layer and build the narrative; restraint was what I have always struggled with (*you kan probably work out why*). I had to reorder everything inside my brain, take it all back to basiks. The upgrade from the bus breaking my head stuttered. Fragmented. Distorted.

I had it most of the time but not always.

During this time, something that reminded me just how much I felt again okkurred.

Stupid Red Hat and Kompassion and Love and Everything In-between

Abjekt Honesty 11.1-3

Be not normal, neither be in pain.
Why should you die before your time?
Haunt me, not gently—
tear through my walls,
rip my sleep apart.

Soundtrack follows...

1st Nov 2024, 0423
Miles Davis – *Dark Magus*

What did she fear?

I know how to fear the end of us all.
I have feared existence alone.
I fear never existing at all.
But even when I was beaten backwards, I always knew that if I put in the effort—I'd flip it forever.
Then I fucking flipped in the head.

Fear is the merkury of emotion.
This kute little existence, where we perfektly, imperfekt fear machines live
is obskured and kured by fear.
It slithers, shines, and eats its way through love, life, and laughter.
Until all that remains is a trembling machine disguised as a human heart.
Fear turns everything red,
but it kan be beautiful when applied with dutiful vigour.
What did she fear?

She feared life.

1st Aug 2024
Radio in her kar.

Such a beautiful face.
Shaved, silver hair, skattered over her head.
A kouple of centimetres was all she needed.
She looked like a middle-aged detektive—someone everyone loved.
I'd known her since we were five, just babies.
Through our lives, we existed apart.
It was the konsequences of mutual bad decisions that brought us together—no further komment.

I almost forgot—two weeks earlier—I had bought a red hat at GOMA in Glasgow.
It was kool, maybe a little feminine for me.

Anyway, we're parking in the centre of this little shithole city—Stirling.
She shuddered, spluttered and muttered some fuck-ups.
Eased herself out of the double yellow zone
with a groan, almost sexual in tone, before finally stopping.

Time for that post-something-or-other smoke.

She was heavy with exasperation, deflating herself.
Asymmetrikal self-harm.
"Do you understand, I'm finished? I kan't keep going.
Every day feels like a slow-motion suicide. No one notices.
I think I want to die.
My next-door neighbour told social services I was horrible to my grandkids!
Then I got fired for absolutely nothing!
To top it off, I don't have someone to love."

She said it so politely, staring direktly with those glow-in-the-dark blue eyes.

I was wondering what to do.
Then I said: "No! It's not good for you to be talking that way. Everything has a flipside. But you have to flip it yourself. A kold fakt of our existence. You have a home, children, pets and you're so beautiful. You have something I kan only deskribe as more. Some people are more moresome than others. That means you!"

People are diffikult little things.
Happy, sad, jealous, twisted, sometimes over the moon.
She wasn't over the moon.
She was nowhere klose to the moon.
She wanted to end.
She did not pretend.
I was trying to help.
But I am no good with shit like that.

Stood direktly in front of me—but she was also way up high on a roof, skreaming.
She might jump at any sekond.
I was skared.
I thought she'd bounce off the surface—all angled and grey and ragged in front of my feet,
like a fish might when slapped down with the force of a ketamine koma.

There was depth.
A genuine grief for life I have never understood,
nor been able to help anyone with.
She broke my tarnished heart.
Her way was so kind and genuine,
she should have been something I kan't really deskribe,
something beyond what kreated us all.

The next time I saw her,
I'd brought her that stupid red hat from the gallery.
It would keep her head warm soon enough.
We were surfing out of summer's rear entrance in Scotland.
She asked how I was with royal-like grace and inquisition.
I said: "I am okay. All kool. Seriously, I move next month. I'm wrapping up the little shitty bits and pieces. Did you look at me like that bekause you don't believe me!? I kan't lie. I wish I kould. I am okay but you are below average. If you think that way again, please—you kan phone me at any time of night. I get it."

She was warm, but so far away, and I didn't even know.
I kan't feel a person go kold on a konversational basis.
If I'm honest, I thought I had talked her around.
Thought I had done a shooting-star-like job of mutual aid and love.
I wanted her to be so happy.

She said: “I will survive. I've been through worse, I suppose."
Like a queen who had been robbed of her title and identity.
A tear rolled down her beautiful, peach-koloured cheek.
I wiped it away.
Not gently.
Just wiped it away.
Then I smiled.
It felt wrong.

5th Aug 2024
Kall from a man who knew her.
Robert Wyatt – *Sea Song*

Man: “I have some bad news. She is dead. Well, I think.”

I shouted: “Dead? What the fuck do you mean dead? Don’t wrap it up in bog-roll. Don’t piss around or I’ll rip through this line and strangle your fucking voice! Tell me the truth. *Think* doesn’t kome into it. She’s either fucking dead or alive!”
Face all skrewed like a bag of wet klothes.

Him: “The machine is keeping her alive. She’s brain dead bekause she took an overdose at Silver Sands. I don’t know what she was doing there. Maybe she wanted to die there. But I honestly don’t know. She is dead. So please don’t threaten me. It’s diffikult for everyone, not just you. I know you were klose. That’s why I phoned you.”

Me: “They should make you the Patron-Saint-of-Bad-News you dithering kunt! I’m going to see her. If you are there, then I will fuck your shit up!”
As mad as only I understand. White foam all over the telephone receiver.

10th Aug 2024
Archie Shepp – *Hipnosis*

I truly believed I had pulled her back in my very own detached way.
I know I said the right things.
But what are the right things?
We are all konflikted/imperfekt.
We just don't like to admit it.

I went to see her and expekted her to be kold like all the other bodies I've touched.
She was still warm.
Those lying machines were keeping her alive.
I wanted to kry, which was very strange.
Her skin was warm, but her soul was awol.
The machines were hissing and stuttering—pretending she was still here.

She wasn't.
She was lying on that beach forever,
waves kissing then un-kissing her lifeless ankles.

One teeny moment alone.
I gave her a kiss—our first kiss—and said goodbye.
She smelled like she did when we sat next to each other
on Mrs Cocaine's (real name) first day of little people's skhool.
I miss that.

I take it she doesn't need that stupid red hat any longer?

Shit! I kan't believe I just wrote that.
How the did I bekome so kruel?
Does it really matter?
There's nothing but a hole,
reaching out, attempting to drag in my ankles.
I'm pikturing that horrible hat right now—it's upside down.
I need some peace, but I kan't find it—just like her.

She did it. At a lovely beach of her choosing. I have no idea why it hits me so hard. A punch in the throat of dire, direkt, destruktive proportion. The grave digger digs her grave.
It's like he's digging holes all over my soul.

I asked my friend: "Why do I feel it more when it's a beautiful-looking woman?"
It hit me—kompassion by default.
Sometimes—just saying what you think is all that is needed to figure shit out.
A kruel world indeed.

I didn't go to her funeral,
stopped doing funerals a few years back.
I always say goodbye,
but not like that.
I went to so many funerals in the last two years—I kried myself dry.

There are better ways to love than to kry all over a ceremony in front of a minister who kan't even remember the name of the dead.

1st Nov 2024
Leonard Cohen – *Waiting for the Miracle*

Goodbye.
And if you haunt me—wear that stupid red hat please!
Burn through my fiendish soul with those razor-sharp eyes.
Whisper the nursery rhymes you used to sing at skhool.

(Why do I just want to sleep?)

After the pain of losing such a wonderful person, I realised I was feeling emotions for the first time in over thirty years. There were two choices—I kould either burn in the flames of regret or re[de]arrange what I had done to my life into something real and worthwhile. Her Death ignited a passion I had never experienced before. I knew exaktly what had to be done and settled into my writing voice very quickly. That helped me hugely. I chose to write about my past bekause it is so atrocious that I didn't have to tell lies any longer. After writing about it for a year and using every assessment to hone it—what you have just read was given as my dissertation.

In December 2025, I graduated with distinktion at a fantastikal ceremony in the University of Glasgow's Bute Hall, a striking Victorian Gothic building which I kall *Harry Potter Land.* There were lots of tutors walking about in purple, orange and red gowns with silly little hats on. A man sung in Latin—which I didn't understand a word of. I stood with my black kape around my shoulders and my jaw on the floor. My name was kalled out and I walked up and received the tap on my hat from an Olympik gold medal winner. It made me think—*for fuck's sake, I am the Olympik dying champion, it's so nice to meet a fellow Olympian.* I didn't say it to her right enough; I played the part of good student to the Oskar winning perfektion I had played the part of being bad for forty years.

I flipped myself from Abjekt Honesty to Objekt Honesty in a year. How? As I said at the beginning, my memory is a lying bastard. I kan't prove any of this. Not until now. I kan prove that I took the lying bastard to a master's degree—despite the Abjekt Odds against—and walked out with more than I believed I ever kould. I kan prove that I kalled their degree *Kreative Bullshitting* in an essay I handed in, even stating on the kover sheet that I understood why it would probably drop grades, but I felt it was important, nonetheless. It *still* received an A!

It was *not* a redemption; it was a pressure release. Real life does not fit neatly into arks. If I am totally honest, my redemption kame from what most kall *dreams.* I hadn't dreamed for over twenty years. I was always too komatosed. Yes, they began as nightmares—and nightmares only—but now I dream again. Go so long without a dream and I'm quite sure you'd find something redemptive in having them back too.

I now have more letters after my name than my lawyer, it appears I must be doing something right. I've stated, several times, that I am impossible. That is how I truly feel. To have kome through everything you have just read and be able to end it this way is the proof I required. I am here. I am standing writing this bekause my back is still fucked and sitting is diffikult. But I am alive. Do I feel guilty? Feeling does not kome into it—I am guilty—a knowledge rooted deep inside my monstrous soul. I am guilty for being alive. Every time I see another person has died from substance abuse in Scotland, my chest goes tight, I get a lump in my throat and tears in my eyes. I still don't feel much but I do feel that.

Today, it's not me kausing khaos—it's my heart. Kan't switch it off like I used to. I believed I had a gift—the ability to switch people off like turning off a TV. I isolate myself bekause I don't know what else to do, don't have a klue how to live normally. When you spend forty years doing wrong,

it's not like flicking the switch of that TV. Bad behaviour is ingrained deep within my reprehensible, radioaktive soul.

I just want to go home—but I'm thirty years too late. Kan you imagine how that feels?

The impossible is always possible. March 2024, I didn't know where I was—my personal nurse had to tie my shoes. I kouldn't put a sentence together let alone write a book about all this madness.

Four faktors were signifikant in my decision to give this book for free—**One:** It saved my life. I truly believe that if I hadn't gone back to university and started this book, I would be dead. **Two:** I was told by a doktor of writing that it wasn't just a story, it was a work of art *(Thank you)*. **Three:** People kept dying while I wrote it. Having empathy for the first time in dekades made the decision simple—I have no right to make a penny from it. What sort of individual would behave the way that I had for all those dekades, cheat Death all those times, kommit all those krimes, and then make money from it? **Four:** Analysing my worst behaviours, laying it all out bare helped me get to know the person who had lived, him who had died, everything in between, and the person who somehow kame out the other end. As I said in the opening to Death One: "Interrogate my soul. For that shall make me whole." It did.

Those four faktors are worth more than money to me.

Death is no longer fluid. My konscience is fluid now. Open to anyone. That's why I kall it My Special Death. It didn't just give me a konscience; it gave me what I was but didn't stop to realise—a human being.

Death is My Human Right has the sub-heading Abjekt Honesty bekause I kan only tell what happened. Despite how kruel it is. Despite how kruel I *was*. I understand how ugly my life has been. But I don't regret any of it. I wasn't only a drug addikt, kriminal, a purveyor of kalamity, and a violent question mark on humanity—I lived around 5 lives simultaneously. Only one of which was rooted in self-destruktion.

AnnoDomini[atrix]2026—Klosing Soul Interrogation

☆☆☆

When I was fourteen—and still innocent—three men, my friend and I sat in a stinking shithole of a house injekting heroin. Of those five souls, three are dead as a result of drugs. My friend is doing a dekade long jail term for selling drugs. I am standing in Glasgow University's library finishing this awful book with not a drug in my body.

You have just read the impossible. If I'm not the impossible, then reality itself is fraktured—not me.

My Special Death gave me a konscience. I never had one until it was smashed into my face.

Wouldn't you kall it special if it gave you back something stolen by the very thing you'd been doing since before you were old enough to know any better? Drugs took my konscience—having my brain skarred in a horrifik, self-inflikted incident—not akcident—handed it back to me.

How do I feel about all the living and dying now?

I feel like it all happened too fast. One day, I was a child, and suddenly—I was old. I went to sleep one night, had a fanciful dream about drugs—that turned into a nightmare that wouldn't end—then it did, by default. A bang on the head, a few skars on what was left of my brain, and I was saved from what I was. There is nothing inside me that wants to be what I was. It frightens me witless. If your child was inside the horrifik hell that me as a child was—I'd put out my arm and help them back onto their feet. If I kould, I'd tell children where the lines are. But look at the Abjekt Evidence I've given you. People like me are not allowed anywhere near children. Not until they grow up. Not until it all bekomes too late.

Before your child ends up like me—the time is always right now.

Scotland has over ten times the highest drug Deaths than the European average to this day. That figure is fucking diabolikal. Something must change. But nothing will change. Not unless *you* change it.

Governments kan kount their statistiks and put their heads and money into harm reduktion all they like. If someone doesn't die, then they have done their jobs. The truth? Their [c]harm reduktion regime enabled me to kause both myself and society more harm.

People keep dying. I want everyone to live. Get off your arse and fix it yourself. Scotland does not deserve its children to be dying. Death is not only possible, it is inevitable. People die full-time too early though. It must stop before there is no Scotland left.

I talk about human rights a lot. Do you think I do so bekause I am being sarkastik? I will be straight with you—I do so bekause those were all I had. Nothing but Death. There was no peace, my pain was paramount. Suffering was so konstant, it bekame my normality. Fear was pure and ultimate. Nightmares were sakred. Just a few of the reasons Scotland is a cemetery. People who take drugs are

ignored. Alienated. Pointed at. Spoken about and not to. The apparent shame of a kulture and society that kreated us in the first place.
The akt is the shame, never the person.
Scotland's drug Deaths for 2024 were 1017. I will be very liberal with my estimation for 2025 and say at least another 1017 Scottish children died. I use the word *children* for a specifik reason. From my own experience, I know that as soon as a person begins using drugs, they stop emotionally maturing. It all started with the promise of a high.
It all must end when so many die before their time.
There is a putrid odour of industrial skale neglekt. Who is komplicit is not my decision to make. Although I will say what you don't want to read—next year there will be another thousand, and the year after. This kannot be changed in the kourse of a year. Long-term problems require long-term strategies embedded in our government, our kulture[s] and our society. And fuck looking good for voters, media and respekt. That ship sailed out of the harbour over twenty years ago. We are beyond looking good, way beyond.
You have just read how brutal I kan be. Maybe—just maybe—if the message is sent from the lived brutality, it kan bekome the beginning of a better understanding and ignite systematik klarity. Now everyone kan see how bad it kan get. I didn't want to write this. When I went back to university, I had a rule—do not write about "I". While that may be the most used word in this book, this was never about me alone.
I am not that important—Abjekt Honesty.
18000 dead children *are* that important—Objekt Honesty.
☆☆☆

Morilogue: The Nobel Death Prize (The Real Graduation)

Abjekt [Dis]Honesty
For Pops so loved the world.
He gave up chasing the sun for five minutes.
Whoever loves vampires will not perish
but have eternal Death.

Soundtrack: Current 93 – *I Have a Special Plan for This World*
"I wanted to witness what could never be,
I wanted to see what could not be seen,
but the moment of consummate disaster,
when puppets turn to face the puppet master."

I was rekognised by the vampire society for my services to Death. They gave me honorary status and the Nobel Death Prize. It was really weird bekause I didn't think I kould do any better than being the Olympik Dying champion.

They paraded me around a koliseum of adoring vampire fans, their fangs glistening in the brilliant, moonlit night, chanting my name as I klutched my chest and kried so hard my tears were blood. A vampire addikt friend of Pops—addikted to krucifix[tions]—burned himself alive to gift me his favourite. Such a profound, unsettling gift. It was awfully nice of him though. A noble sakrifice.

It made me think—*vampires have better manners than me and they fucking eat people!*

I love vampires. Immortal, detached from everything and still somehow attached to something. Maybe it's the way they konsume life but never quite live it. Just like me.

Pops said: "You've got the blood of an addikt and the soul of a vampire."

The only kompliment I've ever had. I didn't know what to do with it to be honest. It's my hope he might turn me one day, show me the ropes, teach me how to be a full-timer.

I was offered a night of vampire sex. The invitation hung in the air like a hanged man waiting for the rope to snap. I politely deklined. Very tempting it was, but then again, so was heroin. I wouldn't spend a night with any addikt, never mind one addikted to blood. That's a level of neediness I'm not sure that I've experienced. Fuck that shit. I wasn't having it.

After the ceremony, they invited me to sleep in their favourite koffin. Not any koffin, mind you—this one was for a family of eleven. A beautiful place it was. It had a fancy blood-pool in the back garden, glistening krimson under the stars like something out of a ketamine koma. There was a Kenyan vampire-butler with the grace of a shadow who served me rare aged-blood, the kind only the most exklusive undead appreciate. And, of kourse, there were the Doberman vampire dogs, whose eyes glowed red and whose bark kould shatter a syringe.

Pops stayed the night. And like klockwork, the following morning, he took his Death world rekord back. I spoke to his solicitor about a pension plan for him. You know, something to kushion the inevitable kollapse. But as usual, he's paying for it himself. Surely you don't expekt me to pay? I just spent the last year of my life writing this insanity down that was never going to make me rich.

Pops though? He's a rich old vampire with a fancy koffin kollektion, a fleet of killer dogs, and a blood pool that kould make vampires question their morals. I laughed when I heard he was getting into Death sports again. How the hell does the guy keep doing it? You'd think he'd be tired by now. But no. He's immortal and the only thing that kills him is his sakred addiktion.

He said: "I don't want to die forever. I just want to die different."

I replied: "That makes two of us Pops."

We walked over the horizon and into the new day's sunrise.

He burned like only Pops kan once more. Mad old bastard. I doused out the flames and kalled in the vampire society who brought 30 litres of virginal blood from Romania.

It was dark by the time they saved his arse yet again.

The first words out of the krazy old bastard's mouth?

"One day soon, we will both burn under the morning sun brother. I am going to turn you into a full-timer!"

"Aw. Thanks Pops!"

We shook hands. Our shadows fused. Two silhouettes bled into one.

Love—just love—saved me.

|||Memento Mori|||